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The Unkindest Cut

Richard Crossman wrote in *Encounter* over 20 years ago: 'A democratic party can very rarely be persuaded to give up one of its central principles and can never afford to scrap its central myth. Conservatives must defend free enterprise even when they are actually introducing state planning. The job of the party leaders is often to persuade their followers that the traditional policy is still being carried out when this is demonstrably not true.' No party leader could have achieved this *trompe l'oeil* more successfully than James Callaghan, judging by the recent more or less dignified resignations from his party. The militant moderates have left at a time when the Labour leadership is further than ever from any socialist ratchet. Indeed so undoctrinaire has our Chancellor been that he has been appointed chairman of an IMF 'astonished at Britain's recovery'. The IMF need not be so amazed; if you implement capitalist policies of public expenditure cuts, capitalists have a habit of finding that their pockets were not so empty as they had hitherto thought.

However, the *trompe l'oeil* is difficult to sustain. As in April, the Treasury are insisting that any further reflation in November must be made up predominantly of taxation cuts and not by the restoration of public spending. Last year the Government cut about £3,000m. in public spending for 1977-78; unfortunately, the size of the borrowing requirement had been overestimated by the same amount. The Treasury, far from sheepishly admitting how unnecessary it had all been, are now out to reduce the proportion of public spending still further. As Roy Hattersley has noticed, what was once obligatory has become laudable

The effect of the Treasury's atavism on building workers, to take one example, has been disastrous. Little unionised, beset by irregular employment, inadequate safety measures and the practice of the 'lump', construction has its own inbuilt problems. One of Labour's solutions, to decasualise the industry, has been abandoned to the Liberals. In the short-term, construction has had to play the role of both the Government's sacrificial lamb and its sitting duck. Dependent on public expenditure for half its contracts, the industry has been used deliberately by the Government to regulate the economy. Despite earlier cuts, principally in the non-housing sector and described in the Expenditure Committee's ninth Report as 'damaging and unfair', construction was cut again in April, July and December. By the year's end it had been treated four times more harshly than all the other sectors of public expenditure combined. In an industry which is the country's largest single male employer, the quarter of a million unemployed, one fifth of the industry, represent six times the national average. They have been such a convenient target politically because the cuts are mainly on projects expenditure and the workforce is scattered around the country so there are no wholly dependent communities. It is unobtrusive.

The issue is not one just of work; nobody is asking to fill in their own holes. Construction is a prerequisite to the modernisation of our industry just as in one form or another it is the means of achieving Labour's social objectives – whether in the field of education, health or housing. Again the gap between myth and reality is alarming. As the latest Shelter report says, 'the Government had been cutting housing while denying that it was doing any such thing'. Having overseen a 17 per cent cut in the housing budget, more severe than any other major item of UK public expenditure, Peter Shore has still been able to say, 'housing from the start has been among Government priorities. That is where it is going to stay'. Would he claim the same for improvement of council properties, cut by 32 per cent during the lifetime of the Government or of improvement grants cut by 57 per cent? The best that can be said for the DoE is that it is pressing for double the miserly £200m. the Treasury have earmarked for construction in November. With nearly a million people living in houses lacking a bath or inside toilet, and so many prepared to do the work, it hardly seems gluttonous. In truth, a lot more besides is needed if Callaghan's aphorism 'Back us or sack us' is not to have a special ring to a British builder.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Mrs Thatcher's Dictatorship

People may laugh – they laugh every year – at the Labour Party compositing meetings and references-back, and all the complications of a Labour conference agenda. In the Tory Party, we observe, they do these things much better. There are no misunderstandings as to what is being voted about. The debates are short. The votes are decisive. There are no card votes. Everything is much simpler. Nevertheless, I cannot help feeling a certain nostalgia for the Labour method. For the trouble is, if nothing seemed to happen at the Labour Party conference last week, at the Tory conference this week there has been minus nothing for the party members to do. Where brilliant management and bloc votes were needed last week, this week's sanitisation was effortlessly achieved. The Tory Party is much more vigorously undemocratic than the Labour Party, and completely unashamed about its lawlessness. So, when the chairman of the conference announced that he had considered very carefully the submitted amendments to the resolution on the closed shop, and had decided he could not allow any one of them to be debated, nobody shouted out. Nobody leapt to his feet with a point of order. It is true that in the Labour Party such an attempt might have been unsuccessful. It is true that in the TUC conference anyone who objects faces a serious risk of being frog-marched out of the hall and unceremoniously dispatched in the foyer. But both the TUC and the Labour Party contain a frustrated principle of democracy. The Tory Party on the other hand is a benevolent dictatorship.

This was seen quite clearly in Vincent Hanna's BBC film on the Tories. The way Mrs Thatcher portrayed herself in the shadow cabinet discussions – 'Well now, what have we next? All right, we'll do this, that and the other. What's the next point? OK, we'll do the other, that and this. Any further questions? No. Good.' It was, for many Conservatives watching, a somewhat embarrassing experience to see how easily the conference agenda is fixed.

It was a good preparation for Tuesday's closed shop debate, for James Prior's performance and the supposed resolution of internal party differences on the question of the unions. We had been led to believe that this would be the great centre-piece of the conference. Earlier that day, the sleeping cars were already booked up for the return trip to London that night. Once the matter of Prior was settled, it appeared that interest in the whole business would be over. Now, from the way these conferences are reported, it would be easy to imagine that Prior did indeed score a great personal triumph in his speech. A few weeks ago, there was a row in the shadow cabinet in which it looked as if Jim was fighting for his political life. Instead, it was more a question of when the cat's away the mice will play. Sir Keith Joseph was asked by a colleague what would be the outcome of the dispute. 'Don't worry,' he said, 'when Maggie comes back from America she'll sort us out'. And so she appears to have done. In her interview with Brian Walden she did not deplore the row, she pointed out that there were genuine differences of opinion and that she thought it right that they should be given expression. It is perhaps not properly appreciated that, although Thatcher is in great sympathy with the view of Joseph, she has nevertheless supported Prior in everything he has done to date. She has perceived the value of keeping her options open. On the one hand, she gets the benefit of Sir Keith's popularity with the ideologues, with the neo-slob element of the Tory intelligentsia. On the other hand, she remains in business. She must negotiate a practicable future with the unions. On the one hand, she encourages the aspirations of the hawks. On the other hand, she runs a campaign to make Britain safe for doves. It is a singular feature of her pronouncements on the closed shop that she begins by saying she hates it, and ends by saying there's very little she can do about it. Politics are not normally conducted in this way. Politicians normally say – this is the problem and here is our solution. It's quite a new twist to say – this is the problem and we don't have a solution. It is, I suppose, quite refreshing.

So in the two key speeches on Tuesday, the theme was realism. To be fair, Sir Keith's realism was only skin-deep, as was noted by a couple of MPs to whom I spoke afterwards. The way to set Gulliver free, it has appeared, was by natural wastage, the non-filling of jobs made vacant by retirement. A few years of natural wastage and the economy could be transformed. The trouble, is, however, that although this talk of natural wastage may appeal to those who already think Sir Keith a genius. it is hardly the best platform for an election campaign. 'Vote Tory Vote Natural Wastage.' 'Natural Wastage Now.' 'Natural Wastage, Every Woman's Right.' 'A spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of natural wastage.' These are hardly the slogans for an election in which the Tories want to make unemployment their issue.

Nevertheless, Sir Keith did pay a tribute to the unions as spontaneous growths and as a necessary feature of modern industrial society. So it was that Prior could get up and speak not on his own behalf but on behalf of (and here he laid his hand on Sir Keith's shoulder) the whole of the shadow cabinet. It would, of course, be unthinkable that he should have done so without careful previous vetting. And it would, of course, be unthinkable that, having done so, he should get anything other than a standing ovation.

Funny things, these standing ovations. They seem to be awarded on precisely the same basis as they are in the tougher communist parties of the world. Prior had spoken on behalf of the shadow cabinet. The shadow cabinet therefore got up and gave him a standing ovation; whereupon everyone else got up and gave him one as well. The shadow cabinet had decided that their collective view should be applauded. Nobody would dream of gainsaying them. There is something very Chinese about the Tories. It is impossible to work out just what they are thinking at any particular moment. For instance, at the beginning of the debate, Edward Heath was brought on to the platform and shook hands with Thatcher. Once again, an enormous ovation. But did it mean that the Tories liked having Heath around? Did it mean that he was on the way back? Did the vast attendance at Heath's lecture on Wednesday night indicate his massive support in the party? An English China-watcher in Hong Kong, following such scenes in the Peking press, might have answered yes to all three questions. I wonder what the Chinese England-watchers at the conference this week will file to their papers in Peking, for there is certainly enormous room for misunderstanding. Nothing has happened to Heath since his dramatic conference appearance last year. Nothing it appears, is going to happen. It is merely that, for the good of Thatcher, and for the peace of mind of the Conservative Party as a whole, everyone should appear to be the best of friends. For the first time in months it appears less than obvious that Thatcher will win the next election. But she has always so far played her cards carefully. Having supported and encouraged Prior for so long, how could she suddenly decide to stab him in the back? It is far too late in the day to contemplate such matters, and there are far too many good candidates for stabbing. In particular, there is the august figure of Moses, whose recent successes have caused her such doubts. If only she could bury her dagger in Moses, then she will be at liberty to do to her own colleagues whatever she likes and naturally, until such a time, she will keep her own counsel as to who is essential to her purposes and who is disposable. For the moment, everyone is essential. It's standing ovations all round.

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Mervyn Jones

Who Will Have the Fishie?

It's hard to believe, but it's true. In 1977 the North Sea oilfields will be yielding 40m. tons of the black gold, a hefty slice of the 95m. which Britain consumes. Next year it should be 60-70m. tons. In 1979 the projection is 80-95m. tons, very close to meeting our full needs (although an industrial upturn would increase the demand).

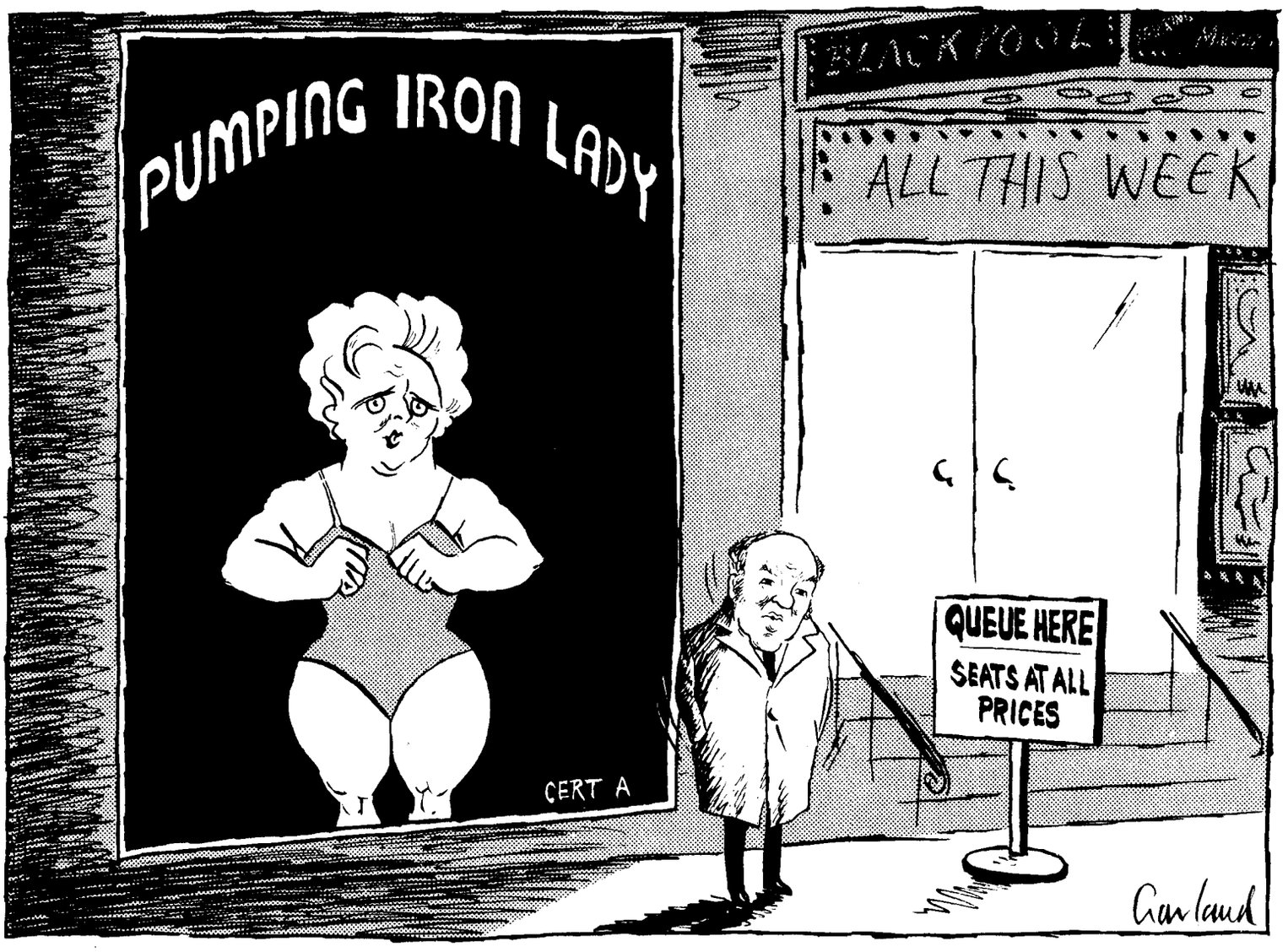
Two years ago I spent a little time on the oil coast; what struck me most was the mood of dismissive scepticism. It was all PR talk, people said; it wouldn't actually happen. It was also suggested that the oil companies, for a variety of reasons – the soaring costs, the intolerable taxation imposed by the hated Benn, the dubious selling prospects in this period of recession – could engage in a calculated go-slow. But if hopes have often been dupes, especially for Scots, these fears were liars.

On the political level, there was a special fear in Labour Party circles, evoked by the accepted date of 1980 as the year when the oil would come in. The Labour Government, having been forced to impose all the sacrifices demanded by economic stringency, would have to go to the polls while the oil was still (as they say) in the pipeline. The Tories, hoisted to power in times of privation, would preside over another period of affluence and enjoy an ascendancy akin to that of 1951-64. But this nightmare is being exorcised as the oil pours in ahead of expectations. An election on 6 October 1979 would still be within the Quinquennial Act. The prospect can be imagined only in poetic terms:

> . . . our fearful trip is done,
> The ship has weathered every rock, the prize we sought is won,
> The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting.

But who will have the fishie when this richly-laden boat comes in? The inborn sentiments of the Labour movement will inspire demands for better schools, better hospitals, better social services. Claims will also be made for industrial re-equipment, for the planned investment whose lack has been the major cause of Britain's economic decline. And there will be pressure for tax reductions on the higher incomes, to the benefit of those who envy the carefree lifestyle of their counterparts in the US or Germany. The Tories, if they are in power, will succumb blithely to this pressure; but it can be powerfully exerted on a Labour Government too. In all this, we can discern the shape of some of the battles of the 1980s.

For socialists, the test will be whether they can use the opportunity to widen the argument yet further. Honesty compels a recognition that socialism in the maximalist sense – in what I call the genuine sense – has been fighting a disheartening rearguard action for a long time. The crucial turning-point came midway through the span of the Labour Government of 1945-50. The massive parliamentary majority was the expression of a national readiness for a real shift of power. (How easy it would have been, for instance, to abolish the House of Lords!) For a variety of reasons – the timidity of that Government's leaders, the tenuous economic situation, the dependence on American aid, the cold war which aligned Britain with an alliance based on an identification of democracy with capitalism – the chance was refused. Social democracy, the ruling creed of the dominant leaders of the Labour Party, took on a new meaning. It used to mean the intention of achieving socialism by parliamentary means (what Signor Berlinguer believes in now). It has come to mean a permanent adaptation to a 'mixed economy' which is essentially



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capitalist. And there has been less and less reason to believe that socialism itself is a possible achievement, given that in a democratic society it must spring from a degree of popular conviction which has been absent for 30 years.

Thus, Britain settled for a compromise, which has been defined as welfare capitalism (although the welfare has got into increasingly poor shape). Sections of the capitalist class and of the Conservative Party have always chafed under this compromise. They don't like the extension of the public sector, slow and partial though this has been; they don't like governmental regulation of the economy; they don't like the taxation which sustains welfare capitalism; and of course they don't like the welfare. They shout at Tory conferences – they will doubtless shout this week – and they pin their hopes on new leaders. When given a choice, Tories give their allegiance to a right-wing leader, hailed as 'tough', 'abrasive' or 'authentically Conservative'. With this reputation, Macmillan was preferred to Butler, Heath to Maudling, and Thatcher to Heath. But neither Macmillan nor Heath did in fact satisfy the expectations of the militants with rolled umbrellas. Their hope now is that Margaret Thatcher will at long last sound the bugles for the cavalry charge. Certainly, she has founded her appeal on nurturing that hope.

What the Tory moderates believed was that British capitalism had enough elbow-room to keep the compromise going. As it was increasingly assailed by mounting difficulties and outpaced by its competitors, as one industry after another simply ceased to be profitable, it was harder to cling to this belief. Something had to give – and, from the Tory viewpoint, the give must be in the field of wages, trade union bargaining power, and welfare spending. The panic years between 1974 and 1976 seemed to be the crunch. Tories were losing patience, not only with socialists and with the 'Marxists' who provide a convenient bogy, but also with social democrats. And if one did accept the Tory analysis of the crisis we have endured, then indeed the social democratic option was no longer open. If there is a serious intellectual motive for Reg Prentice's switch – aside from career calculations – this is where we find it. Mr Callaghan, as a Tory commentator correctly pointed out last week, is the real leader of the Labour Party's right wing. If you go measurably to the right of Callaghan, you discover that you can only be a Tory.

But what about the oil? Suddenly, it promises to renew the elbow-room of capitalism and therefore to extend the life of the 30-year compromise. If that is so, Prentice has jumped at the wrong moment. And Mrs Thatcher has lifted the bugle to her lips at the wrong moment too. Had she brought down the Government and won the consequent election in the spring of this year, any draconian measures she could have taken would have been justified as necessary medicine. Even if she does achieve power in 1978 or 1979, such measures might appear as unnecessary, vicious and doctrinaire.

For social democrats (in the debased modern sense) the oil offers a rescue. It gives them a chance, not merely to win the election, but to keep welfare capitalism going with some extension of the welfare bit (or anyway no more cuts) and without any sniping except from an impotent Left and an equally impotent Toryism. Socialism would not have to be explicitly repudiated – no Labour leader is going to make that error again – but it could be dismissed from practical consideration.

Or could it? Here again, the oil changes the terms of the argument. Capitalism has not survived simply because it works, in an era when it has worked ever more badly. It has survived also because of the belief that a declining and impoverished economy is too delicate to sustain a transforming operation that, if deprived of an export trade within the capitalist framework and of help from other capitalist nations, Britain might literally be unable to feed itself; that, in short, we can't afford socialism. Even convinced socialists have flinched from a venture that would demand strong nerves in times of grave adversity. But what if we start, as no Labour Government has ever started, with a secure economy and with a source of wealth that can be employed – in more than a literal sense – as energy for the shaping of a new society? I don't wish to sound over-hopeful; socialists know, if they are honest, that the decay of faith and confidence has gone very far. Yet we could prepare to make an opportunity out of the removal of one of the most crippling inhibitions to the socialist case. Something, at last, could be proposed in place of fear.

Mary Holland

Jim Callaghan's Other Allies

Not the least of the grudges that Irish Nationalists have against Enoch Powell is that his constituency covers some of the most beautiful countryside in Ireland. South Down is a place of misty, purple hills and spectacular sea loughs, of neat 18th-century villages and rich green meadows. The town of Newcastle clings to the steep side of Slieve Donard just where the mountains of Mourne sweep down to the sea.

It was here, last Saturday, that Jim Callaghan's other parliamentary allies held their annual conference to consider, among other things, their relationship to the Labour Party and, much more problematical, to their Catholic fellow countrymen. As local MP, Enoch Powell was very much in evidence. A dark-suited, slightly stiff figure he looked a little ill at ease among the tweeds and apple-cheeked bonhomie of the rural squires and small businessmen who still make up the bulk of the official Unionist Party. Not that he was ever discourteous, rather the reverse. His manner seemed, if anything, too impeccable so that they became suddenly silent in his presence.

But if liking is perhaps too warm a word to describe the Ulster Unionists' feelings for Powell, it is obvious that they have come to regard him with respect and satisfaction. His major contribution to the conference – a spirited defence of British Agricultural Marketing Boards and a pledge to do his utmost to save them from the ravaging hand of Brussels – was warmly received, not least one suspects because many of the rural delegates were surprised and pleased to hear this sallow figure discourse with such passion on the disastrous milk regime of the EEC.

Much more important, though, they have a high regard for him as the *eminence grise* of the Unionist's present position of strength at Westminster. Although other Ulster MPs, like Jim Molyneux, have been quick to learn from him, it was Powell who first began the process of welding a disparate collection of local politicians, who rarely attended Westminster unless an Irish debate was on, into a formidable group of MPs who have forced the Government to take them seriously – and who has overseen the strategy of their remarkable courtship by the Labour Party.

The main interest of the conference last Saturday centred on two points. Was there any discernible shift in the political attitudes of the grass roots which might signal an opportunity to the leadership to move out of the trenches where it has crouched for the past decade and what is the present state of the Parliamentary understanding with the Government? On the first point, predictably enough, there was little to put an optimistic spring in Roy Mason's step as he sets out on his latest round of discussions with local Northern Irish politicians. The Party leader, Harry West, has an unrivalled position in the context of local Ulster Protestant politics precisely because he never says anything which is different from what Ulster Protestants have been listening to for the past ten, 20, 50 years. Saturday was no exception: there would be no shift on the party's veto

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on power-sharing with the SDLP. It was up to the British Government to make realistic political proposals. They would certainly consider these proposals. On the other hand, he wanted to warn the party not to be lured by Britain into accepting something it did not really want. This was probably a reference to Mr Mason's latest notions. He is reported to be floating the idea of an elected Assembly in Northern Ireland with committees which would have the power to question and advise government ministers on policy. The advantage of this from Mr Mason's point of view is that it would provide some forum of debate for Ulster's frustrated politicians without giving them any power. Whether it is likely to commend itself to politicians who desperately want some measure of power restored to them seems questionable.

The more sensitive subject, internally, of the Ulster MPs' relationship with the Government was left tactfully shrouded in discretion. The one motion criticising the Westminster MPs was undebated – another dodge the Ulster Unionists have picked up from the parties across the water. The fact is that local Unionist leaders, particularly Mr West, bitterly resent the present preeminence of the Westminster bloc, and suspect that all their negotiations with the Government are directed at increasing their own power and prestige at the expense of the boys back home. The majority of the locally based politicians, with the exception of those who hope for a Westminster seat, are not particularly interested in the prospect of more MPs in London. What they want is their own government back in Belfast with power and patronage back in their own hands, just like the old days. They suspect that all the proposals for super-county councils and Assemblies with Congressional-type committees are simply an excuse not to give them a Parliament. And they are probably right.

Many of the grassroots Unionists would also like a Protestant Parliament again but they have become resigned to the fact that they probably won't get it, at least not in the foreseeable future and on the terms they want. In the meantime they are pleased enough with the Unionist performance at Westminster and the sense it has given them that at last someone is taking some notice of what Unionists say. Jim Callaghan and Roy Mason may deny that there is any 'parliamentary pact'; Unionists know different. Their demands have been met on security; the word 'power-sharing' has been dropped from the official vocabulary; there are to be more Ulster MPs, most of them Unionists; and the Queen came to Ulster.

If there are tensions, there is also a certain satisfaction. One delegate said to me: 'All we can do now is take all we can get and the more we get, the more seems to be on offer.' Most Ulster Protestants know that much of what has come their way in recent months has been due to the accidents of numbers at Westminster and to Mr Callaghan's determination that the Government must survive. They are suitably grateful to Mr Powell and to their other MPs at Westminster who have seized their opportunity and known how to use it.

Belfast

Boris Kidel

Marchais v. Mitterrand

The crisis in the French Left demonstrates that, despite all the talk about Eurocommunism, an alliance between Socialists and Communists is still not a feasible proposition in Europe today. French Communists under the leadership of Georges Marchais may have ceased to take orders from Moscow but the party has failed to discard its Stalinist concepts and methods. Towards the end of last month François Mitterrand finally realised that all his concessions to reach agreement with the Communists on an up-dated programme for a future government of the united Left had been in vain.

In the opinion of his advisers he had already yielded too much ground in the acrimonious negotiations. Nevertheless on the final evening – 22 September – he offered new concessions to break the deadlock over the number of companies to be nationalised when the Left took office. The reaction of the Communists came with unequivocal brutality. With only a cursory look at the newly presented socialist document, Marchais and his colleagues rejected the proposals outright and made it clear they were not even worthy of further discussion. Reviewing the situation at Mitterrand's home until the early hours of the morning, the leaders of the Socialist Party slowly came to terms with the fact that whatever the concessions offered, the Communists would have broken off the negotiations. Indeed, *L'Humanité* appeared that same morning with a front page cartoon of President Giscard d'Estaing playfully tweaking the ears of Mitterrand and Robert Fabre, the leader of the Radical Party, and saying: 'I'm pleased with you.' The cartoon was in print even before the Socialists had made their final concessions.

Now, three weeks after the split, it is becoming increasingly evident that the aim of the Communists is to weaken and destroy the party that François Mitterrand built within six years into France's strongest electoral force. Mitterrand was undeniably the chief beneficiary of the united front. His gamble of an alliance with the Communists, viewed with so much suspicion by other socialist leaders in Western Europe, soon proved a resounding success. It was inevitable that the Communists should become restless and increasingly critical of their allies. Not only did they suspect Mitterrand of using them as a mere springboard to achieve power but they also anticipated finding themselves relegated into the role of a junior partner in the event of a left-wing victory next March.

Mitterrand foresaw trouble when the Communists demanded that the programme signed four years ago should be brought up to date. It was not an unreasonable request since, as in the rest of the world, the economic situation had changed drastically in France since 1972. But it now seems that for several months the Communist leadership had been operating on the assumption that a split in the alliance was preferable to a government led by Socialists. All the mechanisms of the powerful Communist propaganda machinery were rapidly set in motion to denounce the Socialists as traitors of the working class and as allies of capitalism. The party is portrayed as having remained faithful to the principles of the programme signed four years ago while the Socialists are accused of having swung to the Right and reneged on solemnly undertaken pledges. In a style that is reminiscent of Stalinist times, Marchais has indicted Mitterrand's closest advisers by name for their bourgeois family background. In *L'Humanité* Mitterrand is denounced for going to Bonn for a meeting with Chancellor Schmidt that was arranged long ago. The Socialists are under no illusions. The escalation of the anti-socialist campaign will continue during coming weeks.

Nothing has emerged so far to suggest that Marchais is being manipulated by Moscow. Still the Russians have never made a secret of their aversion to Mitterrand. During the 1974 presidential election campaign, the Soviet Ambassador, Stepan Tchervonenko, made a much publicised call on Giscard while ignoring the candidate of the united Left. Today, too, the Russians would rather see Giscard and his allies retain power than a victorious Left. What caused them anxiety until 22 September was the contaminating effect of a democratically elected government of the Left with Communist participation on the countries of Eastern Europe. Even if Moscow no longer exerts direct pressure on French Communists, Marchais and his colleagues must remain sensitive to the views and wishes of the Soviet leaders. It was indicative of French Communist policy that during the recent negotiations they rejected the socialist proposal that a future government of the Left should break off diplomatic relations with General Pinochet of Chile. Evidently, they did not want to embarrass the Soviet Union and other Communist countries that still maintain relations with Chile.

The overall effect of the conflict between Communists and Socialists has been disastrous for the French Left. Socialist MPs returning from their constituencies are unanimous in reporting gloom and despondency among their rank-and-file. There is a general tendency to blame the leaders of the two parties for betraying the hopes of millions of people. Hundreds of readers' letters received by the leftwing daily *Le Matin* indicate that the majority still cling to the idea of a united Left.

What Mitterrand and his colleagues fear most, as they chart their future strategy, is the danger of apathy and demoralisation among people who were intending to vote for the Left. So as not to offer justification for Communist attacks, Mitterrand will continue to proclaim his adherence to the pro-

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gramme he signed with Marchais four years ago. He will present himself as the only true spokesman of the united Left, reject offers from Centre parties and avoid any move that would widen the breach with the Communists. He had already promised that, as in previous recent elections, Socialists will not contest seats where Communists emerge as favourites in the first round of the poll.

A few optimists point to the 86 per cent of Communists, who according to a pre-crisis opinion poll, favoured participation in the government and they speculate about the possibility that pressure from the rank-and-file might still force Marchais to patch up the conflict. Yet for the moment there is not even any certainty that he will accept Mitterrand's offer of an electoral agreement. The harsh truth is that Mitterrand is now caught in a cross-fire from the Communists and a jubilant Right. They are linked in a tacit alliance to break the strength of the Socialist Party and demolish Mitterrand as a national leader. Both the Communists and the Right believe that it is, above all Mitterrand's personality that holds the party together. His defeat at the next elections would not only end his political career but also provoke a crisis of identity in the party. Both the Communists and the Right are now waiting for that moment in the belief that they would – each in their separate ways – be the beneficiaries of a socialist collapse.

Paris

Roger Omond

After Steve Biko Died

Steve Biko just won't go away. It is now a month since he died yet few days pass without the South African media – with the notable exception of the state controlled radio and television – raising more questions about the death in detention of the country's foremost Black Consciousness leader. Police Minister J. T. Kruger has been backed into a corner through his callous and inept handling of the affair and instead of his usual bullyboy blustering has retreated into unaccustomed silence.

But he has to come out of hiding some time. For one thing, there is a general election in progress and Kruger may be opposed in his Prinshof constituency. In addition, as the country's top law and order man, he will be in heavy demand to address the National Party faithful. He won't be able to avoid questions about Biko and also is inclined to shoot his mouth off when faced with an adoring crowd. That is how he made his initial mistakes – claiming that Biko had died from the effects of a hunger and thirst strike and that the death left him 'cold'.

Since Kruger confirmed the death at the Transvaal National Party Congress, the hunger and thirst strike theory has been demolished completely. Biko's close friend, Donald Woods, editor of the liberal *Daily Dispatch*, asked Kruger ten days ago whether he had been handed a 16-page pathological report on the *prima facie* findings of the post-mortem. And did the report indicate death could have been caused by brain damage consistent with severe impact on the forehead? Did the report mention internal chest injury resulting from impact on the rib-cage? Did the report mention any other injuries totally unconnected with hunger-strike theories?

'Make another TV appearance,' Woods invited Kruger. Kruger has stayed silent, but the answers are yes, yes, yes, and yes. Some further investigations by newspapers showed that Biko's body showed no signs of a hunger strike or dehydration, and that he was actually overweight when he died in a Pretoria cell on 12 September, and he had drunk water on 8 September – three days after Kruger said he had begun to refuse all food and water. Another of Kruger's errors – to put it at its kindest – was his claim that doctors could find nothing wrong with him during the last week of his life: strange, if he had refused all sustenance for eight days. Doctors were in fact deeply concerned: a lumbar puncture was ordered which indicated possible brain damage.

Nobody who knew Biko or who knows the Special Branch was in much doubt that, whatever the cause of death, it was not due to a hunger strike. Even Kruger later backtracked on the hunger strike theory. Speaker after speaker at the funeral in Biko's home, King William's Town, laid the blame for his death squarely on the system of dentention without trial and the Special Branch. The Special Branch kept well away from the funeral, although police carrying automatic weapons patrolled the streets, as more than 15,000 people poured into the former capital of British Kaffraria. Thousands more would have come, but police stopped dozens of buses all over the country. One of the many diplomats in attendance estimated he had passed through 14 roadblocks on the 500-mile journey from Johannesburg. There were disturbing reports of police brutality as frantic efforts were made to restrict the number of mourners: the wife of the black Bishop of Lesotho was sjambokked as she and dozens of others were ordered off buses in Johannesburg.

The funeral was emotional but free of incident. Later, however, two black policemen were killed in Mdantsane township 30 miles away, and sporadic rioting has flared up around the Eastern Cape. Dozens of people have been detained: the Institute of Race Relations estimated last week that South Africa now has 662 people in detention without trial, the highest number since the 90-day Detention Law was introduced in 1963. More than 100 have been held for over a year. At least two dozen of the detainees are Black Consciousness organisation members.

Just when the Biko inquest will be heard is unknown. Kruger presumably would like it to be delayed until after the 30 November general election. Conclusive proof that Biko was kicked or beaten to death would increase support for the anti-apartheid Progressive Federal Party, which is set to become the official opposition. The nebulous middle ground of white South African politics is diminishing fast as more people realise that the country is heading towards civil war. Even ex-Nationalist Mr Justice Kowie Marais, now contesting a seat for the Progressives, said Biko's death had left him an implacable foe of all 'security' legislation and that voters for the Government would be morally responsible 'in the same way the Germans became responsible when they extended a mandate to Hitler'.

As South Africa slips further down the authoritarian road, there are increasing signs of jumpiness. Conservative whites have acted much as medieval kings used to treat the bearers of bad news: the press is getting it in the neck and as the election hots up the cries of 'un-South African' and 'unpatriotic' will grow shriller. 'I suspect a Special Branch man behind every moustache,' a Liberal remarked this week.

Woods, and the editor of the black newspaper *The World*, have been attacked in crudely-worded pamphlets distributed in black townships. The pamphlets have been in Xhosa, and so poorly worded that they could only have been written by whites. But in the intermittent campaign of terrorism waged against liberal whites, few arrests have ever been made.

Kruger got in on the anti-press game late last week by reporting the liberal *Rand Daily Mail* to the Press Council for a headline and story on further investigations into the Biko death. The Press Council was told an urgent meeting was a matter of national importance: it obligingly met the same night and obligingly found the *Rand Daily Mail* guilty of breaching its code of conduct. Kruger himself didn't appear at the Council meeting, the Council's findings were rejected angrily by the *Mail*'s lawyer. Kruger was always likely to try again to diminish newspaper criticism and this week he lodged another complaint against *The World* for defending the *Mail*. The Press Council has the power – imposed by the newspaper industry itself after the Government threatened to introduce a statutory body – to impose heavy fines and even close down errant newspapers. Proprietors, if not editors and journalists, may get a little edgy now that the Council has shown itself so willing to bark at the Government's request.

The Special Branch itself is not immune to the jitters. A few days ago rumours spread through the Eastern Cape that another detainee, Mzukisi 'Wonderboy' Skweyiya, a local boxing idol, had died in a cell. The Special Branch made an unprecedented move: they allowed a *Daily Dispatch* photographer to take his picture in a police station to prove that he was alive.

But Biko is dead and for hundreds of thousands of people the pain won't go away. It's no answer that Kruger and certain members of the Special Branch are also discomforted.

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Bruce Page

The Politics of Slater Walker

'What we lack,' said Keynes, contemplating Britain's economic decline, 'is not goodness, but cleverness.' Subtly examined, the statement is as complex as Keynes himself. But at simple-minded level, it embodies a chief axiom of our current punditry. This says that whatever may have gone wrong over the last ten, twenty (one hundred?) years, nothing has been due to turpitude. People may have been misguided, but taken in the aggregate – which is the way macro-economists take them – they have *meant well.* Therefore Peter Jay, now one of our official apologists, deplores the 'enjoyable sport of exposing "guilty men" ' and asserts gravely that there 'are not guilty men, of course', only 'defective institutions'.

Did the British economy really achieve its present state of disrepair with *no* significant intervention from guilty men? The publication – at last – of some part of the truth about Jim Slater, Peter Walker PC MP, and the company they founded, provides an opportunity to test this cosy proposition. The main texts are *Slater Walker: An Investigation of a Financial Phenomenon*, by Charles Raw*; and Jim Slater's autobiography, insouciantly named *Return to Go*†. But there are other relevant ones, including various speeches by Tony Benn, and Alastair Mant's forthcoming book *The Rise and Fall of the British Manager*‡, from which I take (by way of contrast with Jay) the following earthy statement about our economic morals:

> . . . the average Englishman believes that if you are going to make a lot of money . . . it cannot be done in total honesty. Accordingly, if you wish (quite rightly) to obtain maximum gain for your client's money it makes perfect sense to direct it towards a plausible fingerman who looks, on the whole, likely to get away with whatever he is cooking up.

Mant is not suggesting that the English (British) are all personally dishonest: only that they may be more prone than some other industrialised peoples to assume that economic effectiveness depends, inescapably, upon behaviour that is ruthless, unscrupulous, or anyway better not examined.

This, if true, is something that macro-economists ignore only at the risk of making nonsense of their calculations: though I cannot recall many efforts by contemporary economists to examine such matters. (One honourable exception is Professor Wilfred Beckerman, who wrote recently in the NS about the fluctuation in the English novel of attitudes to work, wealth and commercial activity. Why is it that Dickens, in *Bleak House*, appears to be totally ignorant about origins of the wealth that Mr Jarndyce dispenses with such healing generosity?)

I suspect that Mant estimates correctly: the 'predator', 'buccaneer' or 'marauder' has always been a much-celebrated figure of our business culture. The admiring epithets I cite all come from *The Times* and the *Financial Times*, but the sentiment is discoverable elsewhere. Notoriously, Sir Harold Wilson's taste in businessmen runs to buccaneers, and further left in the Labour movement they are the only kind of businessmen thought defensible. I recall a keen young Bennite for whom I canvassed in 1974 giving me a lecture about the virtues of Jim Slater.

The attitude seems to be justified, in part, by a conviction that the 'predators' will hasten the demise of capitalism, whereupon the fruit of their supposed endeavours will fall to a pure and truthful socialism. Therefore, most socialists believe themselves absolved from any duty to understand the detailed operations, let alone the moral health, of capitalism: a curious belief, for surely the likeliest successor to a sleazy and unprincipled capitalism will be a sleazy and unprincipled socialism, no grand advance.

But the first question to ask is: do the predators have any real achievements to their name? We know they *say* they create wealth, and that according to their defenders we must therefore endure their disagreeable behaviour – or pretend, like Peter Jay, that it doesn't exist. We may even perceive that to accept these arguments is to accept that means justify ends, which is a nasty thing to have to live with.

But do they *actually* create wealth? Charles Raw's central virtue as a financial journalist is that he always sticks to this vital point, which he is willing to pursue at a price in mental effort, physical diligence and professional risk that few others are ready to pay (this is no 'enjoyable sport'). To declare my interest: I am a friend and former colleague of Charles Raw's. I don't think that debars me from claiming that he has that unusual ability once described as 'being able, when you're up to your ass in alligators, to remember why you started draining the swamp'.

Nobody could pretend that *Slater Walker* makes easy reading: it is merely essential reading for anyone who professes to understand how this country works. The minutiae of share transfers, offer documents, of dates, prices and transactions are all essential to the story: in truth, they are handled in a clean, direct manner, and are no harder to follow than the detective stories with which intellectuals often divert themselves.

Raw naturally has little difficulty in establishing the significance of Slater Walker – actual and portended – for this is something Slater himself is far from denying, and is encapsulated in his boast – credible, when made – that before long his organisation would have a significant stake in every worthwhile asset position in the land. In other words, Slater Walker sought to have more power over the investment system than any other private concern, and more liberty in its use than any government.

Against this aspiration stands Raw's plain-spoken conclusion:

> Throughout its life Slater Walker took on the appearance of many things – money manager, financial adviser, industrial renovator, conglomerate, bank. But from Capitalist to Tokengate – and the Far East – it was really about one thing: the manipulation of share prices. Investment to Slater Walker did not mean the underlying worth of industrial assets like factories and machinery but the only too ephemeral values that companies could be given by stock-market promotion. It created a set of values that had precious little relation to reality . . .
> . . . There is . . . a well-established suspicion in many parts of the community that the stock market is really just a mechanism for making money for a privileged group. The damage that Slater Walker did . . . was that this was precisely what it used stock markets for: and during a decade when perhaps industry's greatest need was for more capital investment Slater Walker and its imitators were essentially reversing the flow to use industrial capital in share dealing and other financial activities of questionable social – or indeed material – value.

One of the basic points which Raw argues, with much evidence, is that, so far from being a risk-taking concern, Slater Walker was really a machine designed to eliminate risks – at least, for its favoured operators. So far from trying to estimate, and accept, the chances that are inseparable from any real human enterprise, economic or other, Slater Walker's real aim was to find ways of betting on certainties. This is what 'insider trading', whatever its particular form, is always about: tactically, it depends on concealing the real direction of one's actions.

For instance, one of Slater's earliest successes was as a share-tipster, under the name 'Capitalist' in the *Sunday Telegraph*. 'Capitalist' purported to favour long-term investment, telling readers to hold on to the good shares which he recommended. But what the readers did not know – and Raw discovered only through arduous inquiry – was that Slater often did the opposite of what 'Capitalist' recommended.

That is, he would buy a share, recommend it to the public for long-term investment – and sell it almost immediately. There is some argument between Raw and Slater about how much of Slater's early capital was acquired by such dealings: but the real point, of course, is that if Slater had been explicit about his actions, neither the newspaper nor its readers would have endured his 'investment advice' for five minutes.

A similar pattern emerges in his behaviour

André Deutsch £6.95
†*Weidenfeld & Nicolson* £5.95
‡*Macmillan* (10 November) £5.95

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as an investment manager controlling the assets of private clients. Slater favoured the shares of small companies, where a few purchases might cause rapid fluctuations of price: Raw details the remarkable instance of a little electronics firm called Astaron-Bird. Here Slater bought himself a large block of shares at low price. He then applied clients' money to the shares, an action which must have contributed to Astaron-Bird's rapid ascent (there was certainly no real-world effect to justify it). Then, at the increased price, Slater began selling off his own holdings – his sales, in some cases, ending up in portfolios which he was managing on behalf of clients.

The clients were not informed about this process. Few people, of course, would knowingly choose an investment manager who, given control of your money, provides you with 'long-term' investments which are the identical ones on which he is realising short-term profits for himself. None of the excuses produced by Slater alter the fact that in such a situation the manager is on a certainty, and the client is on a risk (one which, in Astaron-Bird, failed.)

From such beginnings Slater, allied with Walker, progressed to major industrial take-overs. These were paid for, generally, not with money but with Slater Walker shares. And these were of exchange-value, not because of anything Slater Walker was really doing, but because of what investors *thought* Slater Walker had done, and what they thought the same company *might* do in a still more glorious future. (Peter Walker today maintains that, although he was deputy chairman, he played scarcely any part in Slater Walker's halcyon days. One of the few firm points that Slater makes in his otherwise inconsequential autobiography is the claim that Walker was always throughly filled-in on the company's doings until he resigned to join the Heath cabinet.)

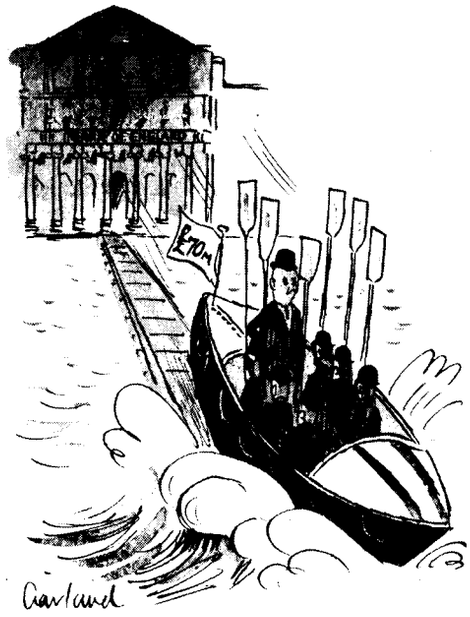
Like most demagogic operations, Slater Walker traded on a perception which was true as far as it went: namely, that many important British businesses are run by managements of little talent. But what does not follow at all is the next bit of the Slater Walker argument, which said that the problems of industrial efficiency – given a touch of ruthlessness – could be swiftly and easily cured. Raw cites a classic piece of marauder-ology celebrating Slater Walker's capture of the Crittal-Hope engineering concern:

> It took nearly 150 years to build Crittal-Hope into the world's biggest metal-window business . . . it took just 21 days this year to formulate plans to rip out the bad bits, bind the rest tightly together and jack up profitability by more than 150 per cent.

This was the kind of 'drastic surgery' to impress the financial groupies who adulated Slater in the financial and business press. And if the nation's industrial problems could be so rapidly disposed of, then the seduction of his methods might indeed be difficult to resist. But as Raw painstakingly shows, the Slater men never made any such startling impact on the intrinsic profitability of Crittal-Hope. What they did was to flog off everything readily movable and devote the proceeds to further stock-exchange manipulations.

Profit, or 'net revenue' as some accountants usefully call it, can be one very useful index about economic operations. But in many Slater Walker deals 'profit' was achieved by using the resources of accountancy to mystify, rather than enlighten. For instance, Slater Walker was much addicted to the ancient foolery of measuring rises in the 'value' of shares by comparing the market price with the nominal face-value printed on the securities. One might almost as well value a Monet purchased at Sotheby's last week against the commission-fee given to the artist in 1885.

Nonetheless, the illusion of profit served as well as the reality to keep new investors pressing forward, and turn Slater Walker into a public company with an enormous equity base. And it was assumed, because Slater Walker appeared to be ruthless, that it must also be efficient. In Raw's account – especially his study of the rubber-industry operations – we can see that the 'dramatic knife-work' replaced mediocre management with management which was often rather worse, and sometimes was grotesquely incompetent.



That such a rattletrap concern should have aspired to dominate finance and industry is serious enough. But Slater Walker also carried political import: it was more than a company, it was a kind of ideology. And here one must begin with the connection to Edward Heath.

During 1969 Slater Walker launched one on its classic share-promotions. Among the many concerns it then controlled were Oriental Carpets, which indeed made carpets, and Ralli Brothers (Trading), dealers in sisal, coffee and suchlike commodities. Suddenly the Ralli and Oriental boards requested suspension of share-dealing, on the grounds that they were approaching each other about amalgamation – though City sophisticates must have known that they were not independent entities any more than a couple of People's Democracies in the heyday of Joe Stalin. Amalgamation duly occurred, and the fused capital, labelled 'Ralli International', was floated off in the autumn at a price which made the residue of Oriental Carpets 'worth' about three times its price a few months earlier.

Some attempt was made to veil the impact of the mark-up by juggling with the denomination of the issue. But no attempt was made to suggest that the merged concern itself possessed any new economic worth such as might make the sum of its parts suddenly so much greater. What value Ralli International had arose from the disclosure that this – out of many possibilities – had been chosen as a new vehicle for the acquistive expertise of Slater Walker.

That this value proved largely illusory in the long run does not alter the fact that in 1969 it should properly have accrued to the public shareholders of Slater Walker. But, unknown to them, slices of it had been removed in advance. Before the public flotation, slabs of Oriental stock, at 'pre-treatment' prices, had been allotted by various mechanisms to colleagues and friends of Jim Slater's: among them, Edward Heath. To be thus on the 'inside' was a pretty certain way of making money in the conditions then obtaining – unlike the mug outsiders, who were to face many vicissitudes with Ralli. Edward Heath's participation, disinterred by Raw from a nominee account, probably enabled him to turn £21,000 into £35,000.

The size of the transaction – which may, or may not, be a large part of Heath's fortune – is less significant than his response when asked about the matter. This was merely to say that he handed money over to be managed, and had no idea what Slater was doing with it. Here, surely, is an innocence as startling as the case in *Bleak House*, giving some support for Mant's claim that to respectable English folk the origins of wealth are better left unexamined.

One must, too, put the reaction in context. Heath the politician was at that time proclaiming the need for real wealth to be produced by real effort, and for its producers to be amply rewarded. Amid all this, his investment manager appears with a '30 per cent gain produced on a single investment during a period of stock-market decline How did Heath *think* it had been done? It seems remarkable that his curiosity was not engaged, for such a result – if not obtained by manipulation – would have been an exciting harbinger of the economic revival that Heath was anxious to bring about.

I don't seek to blame Heath's mishandling of the economy – the public-spending spree, and the hair-raising property boom, stoked with hot money – directly on to his investment in Oriental Carpets. But it is surely possible to take the attitude that the Americans took in the case of Bert Lance: there is no suggestion of unlawfulness of any kind, merely the proposition that a man who is unrealistic about his own finances may judge poorly when ordering the nation's.

If one's interests run to sailing as well as financial affairs, one can't help noticing that Jim Slater was 'breathing-on' Heath's money at just about the time that Heath moved into really expensive boats. The Oriental profits were taken in 1970, when Heath correctly liquidated his holdings on going to Downing Street. In 1969 Heath had the first *Morning Cloud*, basically a Sparkman & Stephens production design in glassfibre: not cheap, but not all that extravagant either. By 1971, with the second *Morning Cloud*, Heath is operating in a different world: custom-designed by Olin Stephens in New York; built one-off in double-skin mahogany by Clare Lallow:

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winches 'the envy' of many a competitor, specially developed for the boat.†

It's of course commonplace to call the 1970-74 Administration 'Slater Walker Government'. (Heath and Walker were merely the most eminent of the Conservative figures happy to be identified with Slater Walker: one should not overlook future MPs like Jonathan Aitken, one of the first to broadcast the notion that Slater must be 'a genius'.) Today the Tories of the New Right claim to have moved on from those ideas: though in truth the values that modern Toryism drew from Slater Walker are little altered by strapping monetarism on to the package. But none of this entitles us to forget that Slater Walker was drawn from infant morn through manly noon under one Labour government, and in its aged evening was found a comfortable rest-home under another.

Granted minor inconveniences, the platitudinous financial orthodoxies of Chancellors Callaghan and Jenkins were congenial to the financial sector in the Sixties. But in addition to safeguarding the rock-pool which was Slater Walker's basic habitat, Labour validated much of the clap-trap which was held to justify its larger expansion: particularly through the mouth of Tony Benn, when he was playing the role of tough-minded industrial organiser. Where a socialist – or intelligent capitalist – minister should have been investigating and restraining the great merger craze that Slater Walker led, Benn actually celebrated it. Profits, he discovered, were the test of success – not apparently knowing that there are profits *and* profits. Was bigness, he was asked, good in itself? 'I think so, actually,' he replied. And in the use of ruthless language he was scarcely outdone by the financial groupies themselves. There would be no 'meals on wheels' service for feeble concerns; the Government had no interest in 'lame ducks'; mergers were admirable for their propensity to 'kill off old management'; this, as he explained, was the technological revolution, and some people were bound to be on 'the business end of the blowtorch'. Most remarkably, he suggested that if the Monopolies Commission were to inhibit the beneficent process of concentrating British industry – then the Government might re-examine the Commission's powers.

That Labour should have helped proselytise for the merger-kings is bad enough. But, after all, those were heady days, and some people really thought that if Jim Slater didn't save the land, then Arnold Weinstock would. What is more disagreeable is that Labour should now shield Slater Walker from the results of its folly.

For folly, of course, it was. No accounting dexterity can exclude forever the real universe of sweat, risk, occasional success and frequent failure. In a bear market, Slater Walker could devise no expedient better than a flight into cash, which given the owlish incompetence of its banking division – where they regularly lent long and borrowed short – didn't help much. And there was the great risk which had been discounted all along: namely that one day people would find out what was going on. This happened first in Asia, where Slater & Co discovered that rare thing: a non-habit forming vice, in this case underestimating the people of Singapore.

When, in 1975, the whole structure began to crumble, and the Singapore Government began preparing criminal charges over a piece of insiderism that depended upon fictional book entries, the Bank of England stepped in to prevent collapse. Some £70m. was made available to patch things up, and to cover numerous shaky debts – such as the advances Slater's company had made to the enterprises of his friend David Frost.

Only in the most technical sense is this rescue fund not public money – for the only reason that the Bank can perform 'lifeboat' operations is that it has the credit of the state behind it. Obviously, the Government must have approved: presumably on the famous argument about 'confidence', though why anyone's confidence in us should be increased by our preservation of such ridiculous structures it is not easy to see.

Now, were the men who ran Slater Walker 'guilty' of anything, on the available record? They cannot be said to have broken our present company law. But that law at present allows feats of insider trading which would be illegal in America, Canada and other places, and some of Slater Walker's operations would have been illegal under laws which have been proposed here and not implemented. Indeed, Tory policy, as advertised by Heath and Walker, was at one time to make operations like the Oriental Carpets coup into criminal offences: a policy which they did not succeed in turning into legislation.

What they were really guilty of, of course, was erecting a great smokescreen of nonsense, behind which they used the investment system for the exact opposite of its real purpose. And by strengthening the nation's suspicion that wealth cannot be obtained straightforwardly, they falsified the odds in an important argument about human conduct.

One may say that only deficient institutions can be so misused, and indeed there is much wrong with the British stock market system. Keynes observed that the inherent problem of a stock market is that the more efficient it is at realising present values of titles to past investment, the more it must become biased against novel, difficult and uncertain forms of enterprise. It is, as he pointed out, almost impossible to tell how a real business concern will be doing five or ten years into the future. But to tell how a share will be doing in a few weeks' time is not so hard, especially if one can find means of controlling the market in it. (Slater told Raw at one point that he considered any share held for *two weeks* to be a long-term investment.‡)

This does not mean we can yet do without stock markets, for, in theory at least, equity investment provides a way out of a problem not otherwise solveable. Because our knowledge of the real-world future is always so deficient, new investment decisions can never be entirely rational: that is, equally explicable to all reasonable people. It is therefore necessary to provide a system through which groups and individuals can finance their own inexplicable ideas.

One can imagine such devices existing under many different systems of property-ownership, but they all come out looking a lot like a stock market. And the essential need for a stock market to be controlled and regulated is still Keynes's one: it is always in some sense a machine for making investments, which must be socially irreversible, into decisions which are partially reversible for individuals.

Our stock market, which is highly efficient at this trick (liquidity is the game's name) is by some standards a most unregulated one, and occupies an unusually prominent place in the business culture. (When Professor Hayek complains about British unions being 'above the law', he should remember that whole chunks of British capitalism exist at dizzy altitudes of supra-legality.)

So, it is deficient. But it is silly to think that merely because institutions are deficient, no blame attaches to people who exploit the deficiences – or that it does not matter when this happens. Looked at properly, this is only the old Communist Party argument that it is best to delay speaking the truth, or having an incomes policy or whatever, until *after* the millennial reconstruction of all institutions.

Journalism is without doubt a deficient institution. That does not mean there is no blame attaching to those who choose to profit by its deficiencies: nor that it is not significant when someone like Charles Raw overcomes them and tells us something about what is really happening. What we must regret is that even his diligence has not been able to bring us the whole story. That can only be done by an official inquiry, armed with powers of disclosure. And this returns us to the extraordinary fact that the Government has so far declined to institute any inquiry into the doing of Slater Walker – although companies of much less significance, such as Lonrho and Pergamon have merited inquisition.

The available evidence suggests that our economy suffers, as human affairs usually do, from the mixed effects of guilty men and deficient institutions. Without more knowledge, we are unable to judge the balance, and unable to move to action.

†*Sailing, A Course of My Life* by Edward Heath, Sidgwick and Jackson. £5.50.
‡*Daily Mirror* on-the-record interview 4 March 1968.

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Christopher Price*

Kicking the Television Set

Electro-convulsive therapy is a psychiatric treatment, used mainly in the West, to treat depression. About 16,000 patients in Britain receive between them over 100,000 treatments each year. It involves injection with an anaesthetic and a muscle-relaxant and the passing of an electric current through the brain to induce a convulsion. It was 'discovered' by one Dr Ugo Cerlatti in 1938, who had watched the convulsions of pigs being killed in this manner and felt that the process might work to restore mentally deranged humans to sanity. So he passed a current of 70 volts through the brain of a homeless vagrant, who was speaking meaningless gibberish. He (the patient) forthwith burst into song, and while his benefactors were discussing a second dose, said in perfect Italian, '*Non una secunda, mortfiere*'. (Not another one, it will kill me). Since then the treatment has gone from strength to strength and now the majority of psychiatrists consider it an essential tool in their fight against mental illness. Though they insist it works, they admit they do not know *how* it works. The most lively metaphor produced so far is 'kicking the television set'.

It is unlikely that a majority of patients who have received this treatment agree with the psychiatrists. Some, it is true, swear by its effectiveness; but a very large number do not. I recently criticised the treatment on *Panorama* and questioned whether there were any real safeguards for unwilling patients. So far I have received 85 letters in response to the broadcast. Seventy-eight say they want the treatment banned or restricted either because they or their relatives found it useless and humiliating, or because they have experienced substantial permanent loss of memory or because they have begun to experience epileptic fits since receiving it. Seven insist it helped them get better and want it retained. These letters have convinced me that far too many patients are inadequately informed of the nature and consequences of ECT and do not properly consent to receiving it; and that, on balance, the treatment must be judged to do more harm than good.

I realise that for a lay politician to invade clinical freedom in this way, is a perilous enterprise. I write without the medical authority that my colleague Donald Gould can command. But the doctors themselves are as hopelessly split over ECT as they are over other psychiatric treatments. Radicals like Laing and Szaz have no time for it; even Dr William Sargant, the British high priest of drug therapy, in a textbook comment which speaks worlds about the attitude of some psychiatrists to their patients, warns against its administration to the man who 'uses a highly trained memory in the exercise of his profession'. The Royal College of Psychiatrists, meanwhile, commend it as 'a safe and effective treatment'.

Nor am I impressed by the conventional psychiatric response to laymen entering this arena – an accusation of bringing unnecessary distress to unfortunate families. Many of the letters I have received give the contrary impression. Here is a typical example from a woman who lives in London:

> When I was 20, at university, I suffered depression and was admitted to the local big mental hospital. I found it a ghastly experience in every way, but the memory that haunts my mind after 13 years was the 'shock treatment' which was administered to patients by the score. Before I voluntarily entered the hospital, I was told that I would be given this treatment to help me but I was given no idea of what was in store for me and would never have gone near the place if I had known. On the day of treatment, I was instructed to sign a bit of paper giving my full consent and stating that 'its risks and dangers have been fully explained to me'. I queried this, since no such explanation had been given and was lightly told that it was irrelevant. After one ECT I was too ill to protest against more and had to undergo a total of four before I was fortunately transferred to another hospital. I shudder to think how often ECT is given to the elderly and the mentally handicapped without responsible guardians to protect their interests. Hearing your talk about the psychiatrists' lousy track record has encouraged me enormously, alleviating to some extent my feeling of helpless rage. So has writing this letter.

It would be comforting if the matter could be settled once and for all by statistical evidence. There are some studies purporting to show ECT as more effective than drugs for depression, and better than no treatment at all. But they are not conclusive; and there are no substantial long-term studies to follow up the subsequent fate of the 16,000 or so patients who receive ECT each year and monitor after-effects. Nor can such studies easily be constructed. Like ex-prisoners, patients who have escaped their asylums not only tend not to want to answer questions but have an inconvenient habit of evading curious social statisticians.

So with the doctors split and the evidence patchy, it is proper that the general public should have their say. Particularly since ECT is a treatment for mental *illness*. I know it has been conventional wisdom over the recent past to deny any differences between mental and physical illness; many people feel that mental hospitals will always be stigmatised and psychiatry downgraded in the medical hierarchy as long as mental and physical illness are refused equal 'status'. Appendectomies and lobotomies, they say, should be regarded in the same sort of light. But you don't have physical treatment against your will; many inmates of psychiatric hospitals are at best diffident and worst downright unwilling patients. Here are just three extracts from letters typical of those I have received:

> I was asked by the sister in charge to sign a paper which I felt that I would not do. However, I was met by my husband (in tears) a few days later when I visited the hospital, and told that he had had an electrical treatment, having been persuaded to sign the form himself. In all he had eight treatments and came home a 'wreck', wanting us both to commit suicide. The voltage used on my husband left him in a shockingly nervous state with a dislocated jaw, veins in his neck distended, his tongue black and he had lost four pounds in weight. [From a Bournemouth woman, writing about her husband.]
>
> She was treated by an eminent psychiatrist in a London hospital who recommended various drugs and nearly 100 ECT treatments. Six years of hell on earth followed when it was discovered she, like the nurse interviewed tonight, had pre-menstrual tension. With the right contraceptive pill she is today a successful secretary, but she too has years that are completely gone from her memory. [From a Kent woman, writing about her daughter.]
>
> When he went into hospital, it was suggested to him that he should have ECT; he said no, and was put on section and was told signing a consent form was just a mere formality as he would have the ECT anyway. He told me this at the time, but has no recollection of actually signing this. He cannot remember marrying me, or any of our courting days and has not been able to work in his old trade, and is now unemployed. He feels now he has no past and no future. [A Surrey woman, writing about her husband.]

Curtailing ECT, however, will not be as easy as banning thalidomide – which it

**Christopher Price is Labour MP for Lewisham West.*

Roger Woddis

Keeping The Bridge

Mr Reg Prentice announced last Saturday that he was leaving the Labour Party to sit as a Tory MP.

Brave Nauseous of Newham
  By all that's noble swore
That the great ranks of Labour
  Should stagger left no more.
The principles he cherished
  He never would betray,
While open to any offers
  That chanced to come his way.

So out spake Spurius Nauseous,
  A halo round his head:
'If I can't turn the Marxist tide,
  I'll turn my coat instead.
For what can man do better
  Than march with two right feet,
For the sake of moderation,
  And the safety of his seat?'

'What courage!' cheered the media,
  Though some who were sickened spat,
While his new-found friends cried 'Hero!'
  And those he had left cried 'Rat!'
But Nauseous held the middle ground,
  The lurching to the right,
Like those before who'd crossed the floor
  He vanished out of sight.

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should be remembered also did wonders for some patients. Drugged and dopey adults can be shut out from the public gaze more easily than deformed babies; and the leading psychiatrists remain as convinced today that ECT must continue as a treatment for mental illness as they were 20 years ago about deep insulin comas and 100 years ago about cliteridectomy – in an age when our own Henry Maudsley and most other western psychiatrists were quite sure that masturbation was primarily responsible for mental disorder. So ECT goes on.

In Britain at any rate. In California it has been substantially reduced by an amendment to the law which makes it a treatment of last resort. The Bill finally went through after a persistent and highly efficient campaign by a body calling itself the Citizens Commission on Human Rights backed and financed by the Church of Scientology. These same folk are now campaigning in Britain for the same cause under the same label. Campaigns run by fringe religions do not necessarily succeed so smoothly in Britain. The Establishment closes ranks with the professionals, and has a whole armoury of weapons at its disposal. Particularly the riposte: 'They are all pretty nutty, you know.' That is why establishment lobbies – like MIND (The National Association for Mental Health) – tend to be more successful. Their carefully documented case is more modest than that of the Scientologists, but no less insistent. They want far stronger safeguards, so that those whom the doctors wish to treat get a dispassionate outline of the risks. Of course, it is difficult to talk in such terms to the severely depressed; but I have found lack of informed consent a universal complaint. Most of the patients who wrote to me did not know what they were in for; and afterwards many of them felt assaulted, humiliated and punished for getting ill.

There is some hope that the Government will take notice. Although the DHSS is by tradition grotesquely deferential to the doctors, patients' legal rights are very much their concern, and they are due to issue a White Paper this year in preparation for a review of the 1959 Mental Health Act. There has been a series of mental hospital scandals over the past ten years, culminating in that at St Augustine's Hospital, Canterbury, last year in which a woman came in with a broken back, was prescribed ECT by a psychiatrist, who did not even deign to examine her, and then died just a few days later.

David Ennals, however, as he recently made clear at a conference in Oxford, has a difficult job. Both the doctors and the health service unions are demanding clarity in the new White Paper. At the moment, the legal position is vague; the DHSS relies on the peculiarly English piece of legal realism that no court will entertain an action against a doctor acting in 'good faith'. But now there are demands for the first time to spell out in black and white the conditions under which forcible treatment can be imposed – whether ECT or injections of tranquillising drugs. If ECT is banned or reduced, the drugs could well be stepped up. And there are those who regard heavy chemotherapy – with fundamentally the same drugs as the Russians inject into their political dissenters – as more dangerous in the longer term than ECT. So banning specific treatments at this point may be difficult; what David Ennals – a former director of MIND – should do is to consolidate the civic rights of mental patients to help them withstand compulsory treatment when they are convinced that they can get better without it.

It is true that there are a few occasions – when a mentally disturbed patient decides to eat and drink nothing for a fortnight – when compulsory ECT, as a final resort, has saved lives. But there was one significant common characteristic of all the ex-patients who wrote to me in praise of ECT. They had understood the nature of the operation and decided to receive the treatment willingly. Indeed, their *belief* in the treatment seemed half the cure – in just the same way as the unwilling patients felt they had been injured by it.

Whether in the end ECT disappears through legislation or through obsolescence we shall just have to see. In time, no doubt, it will go the way of cliteridectomies and insulin comas and be pronounced 'out of date' by its eminent western practitioners, leaving its trail of wreckage behind it. The immediate hope is that fewer and fewer patients will give their consent to it, so that fewer and fewer doctors will get in the habit of prescribing it.

A SELECTION OF GARLAND

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Blackpool Diary

☐ In a perfect Tory world, of course, the pound would now be approaching parity with the US dime, unemployment would be running at 50 per cent, inflation might just have come *down* to two figures, an ailing David Steel would recently have been awarded the Lenin Peace Prize, and the (official) police strike would be entering its second month. Tragically, though, we do not live in a perfect Tory world. At last year's conference things looked so promising, with irreparable national collapse just around the corner, that the Tories could say whatever they liked, provided they said it excitedly enough. But now they would have to be careful – what with those depressing trade figures the other day, Labour's morbidly cordial conference last week, and, here at Blackpool, an oil-rag glinting steadily at the edge of the lumpy brown sea.

☐ Too careful, culpably careful, according to many. On the eve of the conference (it is the Conservatives' 94th, and my first), I was taken into the sly confidence of three young representatives – one prospective candidate, one NAFF member, and one more straightforward YC. Tirelessly reproducing long losts, analyses and breakdowns, they attempted to show how puny and emasculated the conference was by now certain to be. The two key debates, on industrial relations and race, had already been fixed by the insipid selection of the motions. It was all tailored to maximum non-confrontation, maximum unity; it would be non-divisive, non-ideological. Just wait and see.

☐ But who were these guys – and who were all the pert boys and powdered girls cruising round the Imperial's drink-logged bars or bobbingly supervising the fringe get-togethers, all smartly dressed, cheerful, serious? I have always thought that the idea of a Young Conservative was, if not a contradiction in terms, then a remarkably unattractive package. When I asked my three confidants if they had *ever* been even vestigially left wing (the prospective candidate, by the way, looked about six years old), they said that, no, they had always been 'sound' – apart from a brief and bashful fling with PEST on the part of the NAFF maverick. These people are not silk-hatted brayers, with the decibel-count of the natural Tory: they are of the petit bourgeoisie; they have cautious, experimental beards, gingery moustaches, bum-fluff sideburns; they have surprisingly uniform off-white accents; they talk with raffish, mischievous condescension ('Got it: Prentice to replace Prior! The man who destroyed our grammar schools is at least sound on the closed shop'); they are wiser and cooler men than the legendary, over-blown mock-ups they smilingly serve.

☐ Later that night, in the hotel room of a young and fizzily ambitious MP, I watched *Tonight*'s feature on the Tories among a dozen voluble junior representatives. (Apparently, the show went out so short and so late because of Transport House, who objected to the one-sided publicity. The BBC originally proposed to make two programmes, one on each; but whereas Central Office was thrown open to the cameras, they were firmly forbidden entry into – guess where? – Transport House.) After the show there was comment and evaluation, most of it satirical, before the company moved on to generalised, journalist-pleasing bitchery. 'No way,' said the young MP, no *way* would Heath ever stand against Thatcher.' He would get 20 votes, of which 10 would be offered merely to save him humiliation. Why? 'Because he cannot disguise his contempt for subordinates.' Twelve hours later, the young MP was prominently present at an absurd FCS meeting addressed by the ex-PM, hugging himself at the delicious lash of Ted's clumping ironies. Perhaps Heath has got a lot to be contemptuous about. Anyway, it is hard to imagine a Labour equivalent behaving *quite* like that.

☐ Tuesday afternoon saw the two crucial 'rigged' debates. My young-Tory friends had pointed out that, of the 197 motions received from local associations on the trade unions, 70-odd were about the closed shop, 41 about picketing, 12 about Bullock, 10 on secret ballots, and so on. Most of these, they said, had been quite soundly worded, with hearteningly inflammatory talk of 'mob violence' and 'bully boys'. And look at the anodyne rubbish selected by the NUC for debate! The list of speakers had been similarly vetted. 'If I applied to speak,' said the tot-like prospective candidate, 'my application would simply be ripped up'. They promised they would be there to mob Prior the next day, with badges saying GEORGE WARD FOR EMPLOYMENT SECRETARY and other good suggestions.

☐ As it was, the debate got firier than many expected – more so, assuredly, than a sober reading of those 197 motions would have prepared you for. There *is* talk of 'bully boys' – and of 'wreckers', 'infiltration', 'compulsory secret ballot', etc. – but the great majority of the motions are calmly worded, attempts at moral suasion rather than invective. The Tories nevertheless showed their nerves by having Ted Heath (looking like a drastically rejuvenated Angus Wilson) bound popularly on to the stage before curtain-up – a trick they used to work with Sir Alec, as Enoch Powell was the first to note. Introducing the debate, Mrs Rosemary Brown (of the Newham North West CA) certainly made up for any softness in the original wording: her hour come at last, Mrs B spoke of 'rent-a-mob', 'power-crazed militants', 'the Siberia of unemployment', the 'tentacles' of union power that 'claw into' national life (versatile tentacles, those), ending with a powerful quote from our own Paul Johnson. Various speakers then denounced 'reds on the shopfloor', 'communist-inspired takeovers' and whatnot; one MP, *mirabile dictu*, was so against the closed shop 'that it just wasn't true'. Prior bested this oratory, of course, helped by the providential 'Happy Birthday To You' from the YCs and some tolerable anti-Jim jokes. Everyone relaxed. If Prior could just be dull and safe, victory would be his. He was; it was.

☐ The race debate – much less heavily attended – was in fact a good deal more illuminating on Tory tactics for this conference: and provided ample justification for NAFF grouses. The 'balloted' motion really was anodyne. Fifty-nine motions on the topic were received: nine of them (two from relatively youthful organisations, others from South London constituencies) were sanely worded, while the remaining 50 were monotonously fierce, demanding either immediate and total bans on immigration or severe and immediate restrictions. By comparison, the motion introduced by John Pritchard was cringingly open-ended. (' "Conference therefore demands . . ." ' – 'that's lefty,' said a NAFF man: 'it should say, "*This* Conference",' 'It does,' I said. 'Hello, so it does. Ah, but it says "Conference" later on *That's* lefty.') One of the opposing speakers said that he challenged the motion because, 'like all the others', it was designed to 'preclude argument' and 'suppress discussion'. The chairman loftily reminded him that the motion had been selected by ballot. Did anyone believe it by now? As the plump young reps surged out after the motion had been frictionlessly passed, there was much disgruntled muttering along the lines of 'bloody disgrace . . . never coming again . . . no bloody point'. The Tories had brought off their responsible, centrist bid, it seemed, but only at the expense of a rather detailed insult to their rank and file.

☐ Sir Keith looks older, handsomer, sadder this year. In a sparse press conference on small businesses he seemed a bemused and uncertain figure, but his speech on free enterprise, with its risky stress on unemployment, went down heartily enough. He has taken on the ascetic, wild-eyed glaze of Tony Benn, someone he is coming more and more to resemble as his party's only ideologue. Maggie gazes at him with particular motherly care, as if concerned by all the intellectual burdens borne by Little Keith – I mean *Sir* Little Keith.

Martin Amis

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Concorde's London-Bahrain run was reintroduced today on a twice-weekly basis – but it left Heathrow without a single passenger on board. A British Airways spokesman said: 'We never expected this service to be overcrowded'. – *Evening Standard* (David Dangoor)

☐ In a spirited defence of the Government's stance against socialism in southern Africa, the Foreign Secretary, Dr David Owen, said Britain had taken stronger action than ever before. – *The Guardian* (Peter Haywood)

☐ Reginald George Chapman, of Barnsley, South Yorkshire, who was jailed for life eight times over last week on charges of rape and buggery, appeared at Sheffield Crown Court yesterday to face a shoplifting charge. Mr Robert Moore, for the prosecution, said he felt the matter could be left on the file, to be proceeded with at a later date if ever the need arose. Judge Cotton agreed. – *The Times* (Stephen Corrin)

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University Forum

Richard Hoggart

Extremism in Higher Education

My own first reaction to the Gould Report* on left-wing penetration into higher education was parochial and slightly regretful. *New Universities Quarterly*, on whose advisory board I happen to serve, should have looked at the question before now. For there is a problem; and a careful examination, whether in *NUQ* or elsewhere, might have deterred Professor Gould and his colleagues. But this pattern is typical of British treatment of such issues. We ignore them until the last minute and then make a sudden ill-considered lurch. What follows can be no more than notes towards the sort of examination we might have made.

First, then, in defence of left-wing activity within British higher education today. Our universities are not accustomed to being directly involved in the country's political battles as those elsewhere often are. We have instead claimed a large degree of autonomy, detachment and freedom to pursue our inquiries wherever they might lead; and the best people in higher education have lived up to those rights. For all that, there hasn't come from the universities a fresh stream of critical thought on our institutions.

One saw, more and more throughout the Sixties, large and well-funded departments directed chiefly towards research contracts for work whose terms were defined by the donor, universities which felt more like commercial bodies than institutions Newman or Arnold would have recognised, and some vice-chancellors who looked and sounded more like entrepreneurs than scholars or intellectuals. Here is the most direct domestic reason for the rise of the more extreme in left-wing activity within higher education. Faced with the clear need to examine their own purposes, most institutions let unmediated functional demands . . . from industry, from government, from commerce . . . define their roles for them. All this at a time when (and the correlations are evident) one of the strongest demands from entrants was for courses in the social sciences. The mixture was explosive.

A great many people within Humanities Faculties also sat too much at ease in Zion. Their departments could now grow considerably; but they did not much take the opportunity to think about 'relevance' in intellectually justifiable terms, and so about the grounds on which growth of this order might be justified. Nor did they greatly encourage speculative thought, thought outside the bounds of their disciplines. It is true that they often cared about their students in an individual, pastoral way; but without links with the wider context such care is inadequate. Against this background some of those being trained, and not only social scientists, were bound to say that the claims routinely made for these institutions as arenas for free and disinterested inquiry are largely bogus, that there is a general refusal to recognise the extent to which places of higher education have become simply the sustainers and providers of cadres for the status quo.

All this being said, the case against *some* left-wing activities should be a matter of concern. Since some people in higher education are convinced that their institutions are *wholly* to be defined as neutered agents for the continuance of capitalist society, that their large claims are a myth and a confidence trick, it follows (they assert) that, to counteract these massive pressures against radical change, they are themselves justified in not being balanced, objective or disinterested. They believe they have the right and the tactical need to produce one-sided syllabuses, to admit to graduate studies (let us say) only committed left-wingers, and to deny – if necessary by force – the right to free speech of anyone felt to be too far to the Right. This wing of the Left is small but naturally can be influential out of proportion to its numbers. A few of its proponents write so maladroitly that Professor Gould need do little more than let them make his point for him: they can be by turns doctrinaire, intolerant, imaginatively limited and crude towards evidence. I would not care to live in a society in which attitudes such as these were officially accepted. They bring words like 'radical' and 'democratic' – which are much used – into disrepute.

I am myself a left-wing social democrat and a gradualist. This because, though our present system is certainly in some ways corrupt it is also in some ways admirable, and because sudden and extreme changes whether achieved by the Left or the Right would be virtually certain to bring greater illiberalities and injustices. Having seen over more than five years something of Eastern Europe and of the rigid management of consciousness there I know beyond any further doubt that I believe in the long, slow, I hope fair-minded haul. This is neither a soft liberalism nor an indecisive middle position but an approach more difficult to sustain than either extreme. It assumes that we have to go on going on, that there is still a useful meaning to the phrase 'an open society', that in such societies and in spite of all their faults something escapes from the pressures of the system, something gets done honestly, some progress can be made; that there is in the last resort no reasonable, decent alternative.

I do not wish to water down the case against political extremism in higher education. Nor am I saying that, if one simply lets extremists go on talking, they will talk themselves even further into a corner; I would not wish that. I am saying that extreme left-wing activity is, first, an indication that institutions of higher education should not have allowed themselves so greatly to be influenced by pressures from outside, without considering the meanings of those pressures and their effects on the best aims of higher education. And I am agreeing with Professor Gould that the phenomenon of extreme left-wing activity should be carefully considered.

After that, quite early on the route, we part company. To produce an alarmist pamphlet such as this will feed ill-informed and ill-considered right-wing attitudes in politics, industry, commerce, and the universities themselves; it will be easily ignored by the extremists, and they will be supported in that dismissal by middle-of-the-road liberals who – as many of the reviews have confirmed – always react sharply in favour of the accused against tendentious polemic. To produce such a pamphlet in such a form at such a moment is itself a lapse from university standards. Political extremism in higher education has to be engaged with consistently and thoughtfully at all levels and in all forms: whether about distortion in syllabuses or appointments or admissions, or about freedom of speech for visiting lecturers and, most of all about the injustice of not giving young people adequate opportunity to make up their own minds, that freedom which those who seek to limit that right have clearly enjoyed so as to arrive at their own present beliefs.

Above all, the extreme Left within higher education – and I repeat that they are still not numerous; one must not confuse them with the Left who do recognise freedom of inquiry and of expression – must not be proscribed or hounded. This for two reasons, one pragmatic, the other of principle. In many new nations the universities do not enjoy free speech because their societies are volatile and unstable. But we are experienced not just in muting but also in drawing usefully from the interplay of constant criticism and debate. So it is excessive to interpret what is going on now as a serious threat to the foundations of intellectual life. More important is the issue of principle. If we believe in free speech then we must allow it to be practised to the limit, even by those whose own freedom of speech is being used to deny it to others. But where is that limit? If we felt that the institutions of higher education as a whole were so pervaded by illiberal and authoritarian teaching that our professional ideals were becoming quite impossible to pursue, then the time would have come to take to the barricades or the cloisters. But we are not near that point nor likely to be.

There is, as I said at the start, a problem and one we have not adequately thought through. But it is an issue which concerns far more than a small branch of the Left wing; it arises from an ambiguity and confusion at the heart of intellectual-professional life of all kinds. We have not yet faced that. Instead, we have been taken by surprise by this narrow, scissors-and-paste document – a Black Paper with fancy knobs on.

Richard Hoggart is Warden of Goldsmiths' College, University of London.

*__The Attack on Higher Education: Marxist and Radical Penetration__ by Julius Gould. Institute for the Study of Conflict. £5.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Many Mansions

You can really hardly imagine how tremendously jolly we all are down here in the South West. A delightful Exeter embroidery and needlework shop calls itself 'The Sew 'n' Sew', and a roadside pub on the outskirts, its lavatories labelled 'Lads' and 'Lassies', bears a placard advertising 'Snacks' and a message saying 'We don't "chicken out" here because we're the "chicken *inn*" ', which doubtless indicates the presence of that incomprehensible culinary treat 'chicken in the basket' (why not just sensibly on a plate, like anything else?). I've also spotted, near the river and our fascinating Maritime Museum, a merry café named 'Chips Ahoy!' Could anything be more jovial?

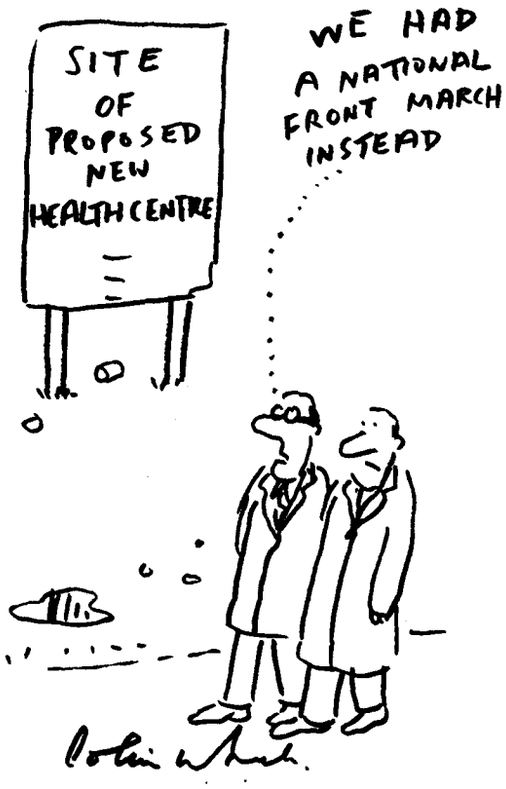
And so it is with a real sense of distress that we in Devon come, down Life's boulder-strewn pathway, upon people less happy than ourselves and my sympathetic thoughts are currently centred on no less an important public figure than Jack Jones. We met once on *Any Questions* and I now forget whether we had, prior to the programme at 8.30 p.m., been accorded BBC Hospitality Grade A (smoked salmon) or Grade B (soup of the day). It certainly wouldn't have been Grade C (veal and ham pie wedges, topped with shredded carrot), a Grade which has been known in its time to produce morose and sluggish panels. It was a splendid historical moment in the post-Reith days when the BBC finally got the message that the more enjoyable food and drink go down, the more words come up.

Even for a 'live' mini-discussion, a sort of wheeled dumb-waiter, its hinged dome heavily padlocked in case drink-crazed BBC employees savage it *en route*, comes trundling down the corridor, the producer produces a key and hey-presto, the dome flies back to reveal liquid encouragement galore, plus a note-book in which, rather squalidly possibly, one's intake of booze is carefully noted down before the padlock snaps shut once more and the contraption trundles off to bring joy elsewhere. What a lark to be in at the meetings where the Grades are allotted ('I don't care whether they're Labour or not, they'll certainly *expect* smoked salmon . . .').

Anyway, having for some years started to twitch violently at the mere thought of Unions, it was cheering to discover what an agreeable and kind man Mr Jones was, and he, for his part, was good enough to suppress whatever horror he may well have felt at the sight of me – prosperous, self-satisfied, Baldwin-oriented and plump, while effortlessly remaining mentally a svelte lightweight. I now find, from a popular daily, that he is worried about 'the big houses in which some people live' but, before we go any further, the words 'a popular daily' must on no account be taken to mean my marvellous Mrs Bentley from the village, ace duster, demon polisher and spirited *raconteuse* over the Nescafé and digestives. I am in this case referring to the gem-packed pages of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Although one can make some sort of guess at the owners of these palaces, I'm not too awfully clear about the exact identity of 'some people' but one gets the impression that Mr Jones has sided against big houses on principle. We know that he doesn't approve of smart race meetings and big houses are, indeed, all too likely to belch forth parties of people in fancy dress, Ascot-bound. He himself, I read, receives upwards of the nice round sum of £10,000 a year and hangs out, snug as a bug in a rug, in a council flat on Champion Hill, Dulwich, a district handy for stretching one's legs and giving Spot a run in nearby Ruskin Park. Ever anxious to do the right thing, and before we all up-sticks and join Mr Jones in reputable SE5, I and my friends here have been wondering about exactly what really constitutes a 'big' house.

'Myrtlebank' itself must be immediately absolved from any hint of criticism. It consists of what were once three mill-workers' one-up, one-down cottages. The water-powered mill is long since disused and its staff dispersed but until the war the cottages were occupied by a similar sort of toiler – a farm labourer, a retired grave-digger, and the village *blanchisseuse*, the village's sheets, pyjamas and other intimacies constantly a-flap on her line. These residents were subsequently accommodated in up-to-date post-war council houses and can hardly have been sorry to leave, for the cottages had no water, no electricity and no sanitation. Mother Earth provided both lavatories and most of the downstairs flooring, and water was obtainable from a pump in the lane. They went, indeed, with happy hearts; and the solidly built white cottages have now been tastefully blended into a pleasing and commodious whole, lavatories everywhere, and my natural modesty forbids me to tell you whose enterprise and energies have been responsible for this joyous and skilfully contrived transformation. The name, too, is mine.



In Appleton, the only local house that might upset Mr Jones is, alas, the stately pile inhabited by my friends and neighbours, Colonel and Mrs Bultitude ('Giles' and 'Bunty' to me) and the mention of their name gives me the chance to answer, if only in the sketchiest fashion, some readers' queries about the Bultitude background and whether the male part of it can be 'good old "Bully" Bultitude with whom I messed down at Aldershot back in the late 30's'.

Well, it may indeed be he but the Colonel's military career has, quite frankly, never been very precisely filled in, though I have heard Bunty refer to a bygone event as having taken place 'while Giles was stationed at Tidworth'. This unfortunately gets us nowhere as to be stationed at Tidworth, as many past and perhaps present members of OTC and CCF camps will recall, is a disaster that might happen to anybody. Tidworth camps came in a choice of two – Tidworth Park and Tidworth Pennings and there wasn't, in the field of discomfort, a penny to put between them, the actual name 'Park' being perhaps marginally preferable to 'Pennings' which carries with it such a strong suggestion of claustrophobia. I have, it is true, heard the Colonel say 'Steady the Buffs!' but that, again, gets us nowhere. Bunty does sometimes wear, pinned onto a saucy beret in fawn velours, a small and diamond-encrusted regimental badge but as I could never, even when in the army, recognise any badge of any kind, that is no help. I sort of see him in the turret of a tank, barking out orders and A.1 with wireless messages ('Do you read me?'). On the other hand, the Bultitudes' groaning board rather suggests the Army Catering Corps, but then, do they have diamond badges?

In no circumstances must Mr Jones ever be allowed anywhere near the Bultitudes' extensive property with its rolling-lawns, South wing, 'guest suites', billiard-room, pool, sauna, patio, barbecues, car ports, helicopter pad or any other of the weird amenities that the rich incomprehensibly splash out on. If the dear fellow should ever wander into our district, direct him at once to the lane at the bottom of which he will find 'Myrtlebank' nestling. Here the ghosts of innumerable downtrodden, deprived and underpaid mill-workers give the whole thing, in what people call 'the climate of today', an air of socialist respectability that he should find irresistible.

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Letters to the Editor

Party Democracy

Sir, There is more of a dilemma than you suggest (NS 7 October) in trying to take democracy forward by inviting all paid-up members to the selection conference. It looks more democratic, but is it?

Those of us who regularly attend local Labour Party, and indeed local trade union branch, meetings know how distorted is the general view of what goes on at these meetings and of how decisions are made. That distortion is often caused by the media. Imagine the role that the local papers would play in selecting a candidate. Not only would they influence voting simply by labelling candidates, they would also affect the choice by labelling them wrongly. We would be influenced to vote, not by what the candidate told us about himself but by what a less informed local reporter chose to say. Would we really be taking democracy forward by allowing one such powerful influence to weigh heavily this way or that? Whether the papers went left or right, it would be equally unfair for the less favoured candidates; and the chances are that we would be voting less for people and policies, and more for sub-editors' slogans.

For the system to be fair, both publicity and expenditure would need to be tightly controlled, or else the rich will be at an advantage. Even if expenditure is controlled in the immediate preselection period, the suspicion will remain that the wealthy long-term campaigner will buy the selection simply by paying a few hundred subscriptions. A great boost for membership figures, no doubt, but hardly the right way to democracy. At present anyone with a 'sub' paid for him still has to attend the branch meeting, inform himself of what happens and be voted as a delegate before he can go to the GMC and vote in the selection. In that sense the present system acts as a safeguard against corruption.

Please do not ignore the fact either, that under this same system, every member can go to every branch meeting. The selection base is already as broad as it can be. Every member can be involved in the branch selection of a candidate for nomination as the parliamentary candidate. At grass-roots level you cannot be more democratic than that. If members don't use the system, it is hardly the fault of the system. Before you reach for your next banner headline about democracy, consider the role of the local paper; consider the power of a little wealth and please consult your local party and trade union branch.

MICHAEL FREEMAN

40 Avondale Avenue
London N12

Sir, Your leader last week on the Left and Party Democracy, although voicing the well-known fact that the Labour Party is now largely run by cliques, both of the Left and the Right, proved ultimately glib in its conclusion. The problem of the party's organisation and structure has been aggravated by the serious decline in membership and, in the number of those actively involved. (By 'actively' I mean the number of members who, at the minimum, attend branch meetings once a month and, those who may be GMC delegates.) The concept of 'one man, one vote' e.g. in the selection of a parliamentary candidate, may appear appealing to Prenticite 'democrats' but serious objections can be raised to such primary elections.

At present when a sitting MP announces his intention to stand down, Transport House sends what is known as a 'B' list to the constituency party for consideration. The list can include over 70 names and biographies of people wishing to stand in the selection procedure. From this the individual branches draw up their own separate short lists of those they wish to interview. A branch may hold several meetings, interviewing the candidates who have agreed to appear, before it makes a final decision. The choice is then referred to the Executive Committee of the constituency party along with the nominations of the other branches. (There is also an 'A' list submitted by the trades unions direct to the Executive Committee which ordinary branch members are not allowed to see; this is an area where reform would be most welcome.) Having considered all the nominations the EC then draws up its own short list from them and this is submitted to the GMC.

My objection to having a postal ballot of all the members in the constituency is mainly of a practical nature. Given the large number of applicants, who is to decide on the short list for a 'primary'? Is it to be Transport House? The EC of the constituency party? A primary election, I contend, would be unfairly biased in favour of those who are already well known to the public e.g. established politicians, television personalities and journalists. At least the present system permits party members to choose whom to interview and, the advantage of directly questioning the applicants. And what does it cost party members actually to come to these meetings, so participating in a selection procedure and debating with people who are seeking to represent the Labour Party in Parliament for perhaps, a great length of time? A few evenings at the most. The alternative is a system that will be no more democratic than the present one, for the question of who draws up the short list for a primary is still unanswered.

As has been mentioned, the decline in membership (particularly, in this context, the active element) lies behind the present problem. But, as with our anachronistic parliamentary system, 'one man, one vote', would not, in itself, provide a solution. Your leader writer might, in future, take into account all the factors involved, rather than concluding that opposition to the change he envisages comes merely because it 'touches the sensitive nerve of the Labour Party's own internal structure'.

MICHAEL GANNON

219 Dawes Road
London SW6

Sir, Your leading article last week puts an unanswerable case for the rights of all party members to choose their representatives at both local and national level. Having acknowledged the merits of 'one man, one vote' amongst party members, perhaps the NEW STATESMAN might also recognise the validity of 'one man, one vote, one value' and give a fair hearing to the arguments for and against changes in our electoral system which could give voters a real democratic choice in local and national elections? But perhaps the vested interests of those elected by the present system will prevent such open debate!

PETER KNOWLSON

69 Hartfield Road
London SW19

Roots

Sir, I hope I am not snobbish about my proletarian origins as Mervyn Jones alleges (London Diary 7 October). I am certainly not ashamed of them and I have recorded in 'standard reference books', when asked, the simple fact that I worked in the coal mines and later served in the army in the years 1944-48. I dug coal from a 14-inch thick coal seam, lying on my side, with a pick and shovel like the rest of my fellow workers as best I could. They were miners. What else was I but a miner? True, I wasn't born to the job. I was an industrial conscript. I was 18. I hated it. And I couldn't get out to join the army quick enough. The experience was good for me, for it was one aspect of working class life I had never endured.

During these coal mining days I studied at night school to improve my chances of getting into university to study medicine after my demob. Thanks to Ernie Bevin, who incidentally sent me down the mines, I got one of his Ministry's Further Education and Training Grants for ex-servicemen which financially put me through medical school. And let Jones shed tears, this widow's son would otherwise never have made it.

So the article in the Campaign for Labour Victory broadsheet, not written by me, is not so inaccurate after all. Our origins are our origins. What I find insufferable, especially in the Labour movement, are those of our colleagues from middle-class families with a bourgeois education who try to conceal this. Or, worse still, publicly regard the working class as perfect. We are not. Nobody is.

DICKSON MABON

House of Commons

Sir, I should not have thought that Mervyn Jones (NS 30 September) would take anything on credit from Woodrow Wyatt. The original author of the saying that socialism is about equality is not Hugh Gaitskell, but Arthur Lewis, the West Indian economist, who produced it for the pleasure of the social democratic wing of the Labour Party some 25 years ago.

I have never fully agreed with the remark, believing that socialism in our times has to do with inequality – being primarily concerned to diminish the inequalities of society as occasioned by the unevenness of the behaviour of humans.

CHARLES ARCHIBALD

Greddock Cottage
Palmure, Nr Newton Stewart
Scotland

Understanding Afrikaners

Sir, Not everyone who knows South Africa first-hand would agree with Mr Okoro (Letters 30 September) that Afrikaners are all so cruel or quite so fanatical as he suggested, but it is a pity that the verbal warmongers at the Labour Party Conference, who wanted an economic blockade or even a military invasion of the Republic, did not pay more attention to his comment upon their possible consequences in a racial bloodbath. It is easily the worst feature of contemporary 'socialism' in

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Britain that it has adherents who can comfortably decree horrible consequences for the lives of *other* people, made worse by a factual ignorance of the foreign situation they claim concerns them and by an obscene indifference to similar or worse 'human rights' issues elsewhere in the world. The only consistent element in this quasi-moralistic warmongering seems to be that its long-term effects, economically and strategically, can benefit only Soviet Russia – never Great Britain.

Racial discrimination in Southern Africa, and the disparities of wealth and privilege associated with it, must come to an end, along with comparable injustices in many other countries. But why should not the suggestion, from Mr Okoro, of a peaceful partition of that region, combined with western military and financial assistance, be an acceptable step in that direction, without the brutal uncertainties of sanctions and major war? The Afrikaners surely do have a point when they refer to their own long history as an indigenous people at the Cape, and also – when you *think* about it – to the actual fact that South Africa has never had a culturally homogeneous population, but does consist of several 'nations' each with its own language, tradition and main settlement-area. Have your anti-apartheid readers considered the practical administrative difficulties, for a start, of establishing a democratic multi-racial unitary system there? There is no successful example anywhere else on the globe, and never has been.

The original Bantustan scheme, suggested by the Tomlinson Commission and slowly adopted by Dr Verwoerd and Mr Vorster, was never adequate, even if the proposed self-governing black homelands were linked to the former British 'Protectorates'. But there have been better ideas which could be implemented, as an alternative to the establishment – through external attack – of a black Marxist-inclined regime, if Anglo-American support was provided. Professor Newell Stultz examined some of the so-called 'partition' proposals, all less troublesome than racial conflict, in the July 1977 issue of *South Africa International*. Since then press reports have shown that prominent Afrikaners are thinking hard along these lines, some prepared even to accept the division of South Africa into two main areas with their loss of Great-Trek territory and much of the Rand mining industries.

The question for social democrats in Britain and other western countries is whether we really believe in *national* self-determination. In principle, why should not the 'whites' continue to rule *themselves*, though not rule the other 'non-white' peoples? Is not 'home rule' *all round* a legitimate alternative to racial war, or even the imposition of a one-party Soviet-aligned block – not 'multi-racial' – regime upon the ruins of a sub-continent of immense wealth and unique fascination?

Y. T. Steyn

Glenwick House
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Essex

Twenty Years On

Sir, I also was present 20 years ago at Brighton, and heard Nye Bevan's speech against the unilateralist (London Diary 7 October) resolution. I do not recall it as a 'stumbling, petulant speech' and although I heard Nye Bevan make many speeches, certainly not 'the worst in his life'. My memory is of a powerful, eloquent and entirely convincing speech which achieved something no other speech at any Labour conference ever achieved before or since. The speech came just before the lunch break and the TGWU delegation asked for the vote to be taken after lunch rather than before. During the lunch interval they – and other delegations – met and decided to reverse their support for the unilateralist resolution which was then defeated. Not the least of Nye Bevan's contributions to the Labour Party was his courageous decision to take the conference by the scruff of its neck and force them to face the realities of life.

J. Stewart Cook

37 Frances Road
Windsor
Berks

Dead Ducks

Sir, 'Political dead ducks' (London Diary 30 September) do not usually stay dead. I recall that Alec Douglas-Home describes Britain's entry into the Common Market as 'a dead duck'. And now look where we are.

State aid to political parties is part of the parliamentry system of every democracy in Western Europe. It will come here, whatever you say, for it is the only way of giving the parties and candidates the money they need without increasing still further their dependence upon particular sections of their supporters.

Houghton of Sowerby

House of Lords

The Bible and Unbelievers

Sir, Mr N. E. Knight (Letters 7 October) suggests that the justification of the Old Testament is that, 'in spite of the grim catalogue of evil, men were capable also of sublimity'. The problem of the Old Testament, however, is that much of the evil it grimly catalogues is attributed not to men, but to God. 'However horrifying the turmoil of the world,' he says, 'the divine spark can always be found.' But the divine spark is usually found inflicting horrifying suffering on the human victims of its wrath.

Mr Knight adds that, 'above all, Jesus Christ crystallises in Himself all the strivings and moral progress of previous centuries'. But the New Testament adds a new dimension to the evil of the Old – or the threat of everlasting punishment for the 'goats', the millions of people who do not believe in Jesus. Judaism was bad enough, but Christianity was a disaster, destroying the strivings of the classical world, and obstructing moral progress for nearly 2,000 years.

The true value of the Old and New Testaments is their revelation of the evil of the Judaeo-Christian religion. No wonder that the book named by most freethinkers as the one which converted them from their faith is the Bible, and how right Mr Arthur Marshall was to describe its horrors.

Charles Meyton

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Maintenance Defaulters

Sir, It is anomalous that we now have an estimated 3,000 men in prison who are being sapped of the will to work. They are the individuals who have – often quite unwittingly – fallen foul of the divorce system and the court orders which decree that they must pay maintenance which is beyond their means to former wives and, in some cases, to children whom they are often prevented from seeing on any regular basis.

The cost of keeping a man in prison is said to be about £35 a week. As soon as the maintenance defaulter emerges from prison, he is charged with an order to pay the previous arrears plus arrears which have accumulated during his stay inside. While in prison he has not, of course, earned anything at all. If he owns property or goods, a distraint order can be issued. Within a short period he may well lose his home, most of his possessions and, if he has remarried, his new wife as well. It is unfair to expect a new wife to put up with such a situation, and it is not difficult to envisage the effect on a man's morale when he finds himself in the category of a second-class citizen.

In this twilight zone of archaic law at a time of liberalisation of other attitudes throughout society, it would seem that we have overlooked the need to review the thinking behind a system which can degrade and perhaps ruin a man. Worse, it can continue doing so until he has no job, no income and no hope. It is noticeable that while we have voluntary and official bodies to give help to the victims of practically every other form of misfortune, the maintenance defaulter remains a man alone.

Frederick Oughton

26 Percy Road
London W12

Through a Lens Darkly

Sir, As a photographer who was one of those involved in testing the *Sunday Times* theory that the photographs published by the *Daily Express* of the Seven Sisters Road bank raid could not have been taken by a passer-by (unless this anonymous passer-by is capable of walking on thin air past a 20 foot high window) I would be happy to prove to *Daily Express* editor Derek Jameson (Letters 7 October) that they are perfectly correct. I must say that in the circumstances I am not surprised that he wishes to preserve the anonymity of the photographer.

Chris Davies

65 Cromwell Avenue
London N6

Middleton Murry

Sir, As one of those who cherish fond memories of John Middleton Murry, I would like to protest at Victoria Glenddinning's description of him as a 'literary pimp' (NS 30 September). It may well be the case that he lived, in part, on Katherine Mansfield's royalties after her death; but so did Leonard Woolf, who is referred to so favourably by your reviewer, live in part on the royalties of Virginia Woolf after her suicide. One is no more a 'pimp' than the other.

Maurice Cranston

The London School of Economics
Houghton Street
London

Boys of the Old Brigade

Sir, I am writing, for Quartet Books, a book about the working-class men who fought in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, told as far as possible in their own words.

I have had a great deal of assistance and help with contacts through the International Brigade Association but I know there are people who do not belong or who have lost touch. If anyone would be interested in talking over their experience with me, I can be contacted at my home address.

Judith Cook

38 Muswell Hill
London N10

Treacherous Territory

Sir, I am compiling a collection of Excuses, sub-titled Lies, Evasions & Deceits, to be published by Blond & Briggs. Any suggestions would be most gratefully received, acknowledged in the book, and returned.

Diana Petre

8 Caroline Terrace
London SW1

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Campbell

The Sewage Crisis

The Conservatives: A History from Their Origins to 1965 edited by LORD BUTLER *Allen & Unwin* £7.50
The Tory Leaders: Their Struggle for Power by NIGEL FISHER *Weidenfeld* £5.95

If we did not already know that a general election was coming up, the appearance of these two disguised manifestos would serve as a reminder. They are in addition carefully timed to catch the party conference season. Mrs Thatcher decorates both covers of Sir Nigel Fisher's little book: on the front, waving coyly against a montage of her predecessors; on the back, posing chummily with the author. The message of this undemanding canter through Tory politics since Churchill is a ringing endorsement of her leadership. Lord Butler's is an altogether weightier volume; nevertheless, for all the undoubted scholarship of his four contributors, it is no less patently political in purpose. 'The Tory tradition is the Tory hope' is the editor's twice-asserted motto. 'A study of the past', he tells us in his introduction, 'will be all the more worthwhile because things are not easy at the present time and because in my view it is imperative to revivify Conservatism.' He assumes his readers share this allegiance.

The avowed intention of the book, then, is to remind modern Tories of their roots. A laudable aim, no doubt; but if Lord Butler was really as closely involved in selecting and guiding his contributors as he claims – such big-name editors are not always so active – it must be said that he has not achieved either the 'continuity' or the 'completeness' that he hoped for. It is difficult, perhaps, even for the Master of Trinity to exercise effective editorship over historians of the quality and seniority of Norman Gash, Donald Southgate, David Dilks and John Ramsden; but in the absence of a single unifying plan, the book, like most such compilations, is a mess.

While Professor Gash is marvellously lucid in pinpointing the steps by which loose 18th-century Toryism was transformed in the 1830s into an organised political party claiming the name 'Conservative', Professor Southgate's chapters covering the long and critical span from 1846 to 1922 are so dense, detailed and allusive as to be very nearly unreadable: the tyro Tory, eager to understand his heritage, will find him heavy going. If Professor Southgate is difficult, however, Professor Dilks is rather too easy, offering only a relaxed and amusing (and excessively generous) study of Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain that does not attempt to go beyond biography, though he takes almost as many pages to cover 18 years as Professor Southgate takes for 80. Lord Butler must take the responsibility.

To a lesser degree, Dr Ramsden's admirably clear account of the post-war years suffers from the same exaggerated *führerprinzip* that unbalances Professor Dilks's contribution. Both these writers on the modern period are reluctant to ask who the Conservatives actually are, or were. I am not asking for pages of statistics listing the numbers of Old Etonians, small businessmen and owner-occupiers; but a party is after all essentially its members. At the same time it can achieve power only by appealing to a much wider body of voters. This tension between the demands of the active members and those of their occasional supporters is the pivotal relationship which would require attention in a serious history of any party; it is particularly important in the case of a party which, though resting on a very narrow social base, has always seen itself as a peculiarly *national* party. Baldwin lectured the party in 1924 on the need to widen its intake:

> If you must have a candidate who can water his constituency with £1,000 a year you are going to have a choice of about ½ per cent of the population, and if you are going to fight a party that has a choice of the whole population, you will never beat them in this world and, more than that, you will never deserve to beat them.

But once the party was safely returned to power he did nothing about it; in 1947 Nigel Fisher was still asked at his selection meeting how much he could contribute. The rules regarding candidates' subscriptions were in fact changed around this time as part of the shake-up that followed the 1945 defeat. 'Henceforth it could be said that the career of a Conservative MP is open to all the talents,' Dr Ramsden writes, ' – an important step towards harmony with the post-war world.' Yet he does not go on to analyse the 1950-51 intake, or its impact on the party's aims and image.

The class factor is surely inescapable in the study of British parties. Yet there is no direct discussion in this book of what has become, since the rise of the mass electorate, the central problem of Toryism: how to rebut the charge that the party's only real *raison d'être* is sheer class interest, its national rhetoric no more than what Joseph Chamberlain in his Liberal days called 'the convenient cant of selfish wealth'. The charge has been very effectively rebutted, if one is to judge by election results. But not one of the three authors to whom the question is relevant really tries to explain the party's success, as if it were in any way surprising; implicit Tories all, they take for granted its survival as the one eternal national party which, by a well-tried formula of imperceptible adaptation that persuades itself that it is still safeguarding the essentials (even though Bonar Law, for example, would regard modern Britain as thoroughly socialised) has outlasted and will outlast the ephemeral 'rice-crispy parties' of the Left. The task for a more sceptical historian must be to dig beneath the self-congratulatory rhetoric, to see the Tories as others see them, and ask how they have got away with it.

Does the answer lie in the realm of policy? What then is the positive content of Conservatism that has enabled it to survive and inspire able men? It is to Disraeli that we must look, for, as Professor Southgate points out, it is above all to him that Tories still turn, 'as to a sacred flame'. Peel sets up no comparable resonance in the Tory soul – on the contrary, for at least 50 years after his death his memory was shunned, very much as Labour still shuns MacDonald. It was Balfour during the tariff controversy who swore, 'I will not be a Peel, to split the Tory party.' Peel's reforming legacy descended through Gladstone to the Liberals, not to the Tories. It took nearly three decades before Disraeli saw the need to equip the Tories with a vote-catching ideology with which to oppose Gladstonian Liberalism; but in 1872 he set out deliberately to invent one in two speeches, at Manchester and the Crystal Palace, which Professor Southgate repeatedly calls 'seminal'. To the traditional Tory reverence for the constitution (the monarchy, the House of Lords, the established church), Disraeli shrewdly added two planks with more appeal to an enlarged electorate: the development of the empire (in which he had hitherto shown little interest) and a vague concern for 'the condition of the people'.

Though Joe Chamberlain most vigorously exploited the imperial theme, and Baldwin identified himself particularly with the constitutional, little life remained – despite Churchill's rear-guard efforts – in the first two themes of this trinity by the time Macmillan came to power. One might imagine the shameless materialism of the Macmillan years to be simple electoral opportunism. Perhaps it was, but John Ramsden accords it the Disraelian imprimatur:

> Disraeli has pointed out that the 'policy of sewage' was more popular with the people and more in their interests than 'all the pains and pleasures of the Ballot Act'; Macmillan in the 1950s was reasserting the same tradition of Conservatism when he portrayed his own party as the believers in material well-being and the other parties as believers in moral changes and structural reforms.

Against the still puritanical and idealistic Labour Party of Gaitskell, this appeal was successful. Harold Wilson, however, swiftly trumped it, leaving the Tories empty-handed, protesting implausibly about 'the politics of envy'. The Disraelian box of tricks was suddenly exhausted.

In keeping with the book's didactic purpose, Dr Ramsden tries in his conclusion to draw an encouraging lesson from the Tory past. He finds one in an over-simple but convenient dualism which he claims has characterised the party's 'finest moments', a fruitful dialogue between tradition and reform represented first by Disraeli and Peel and later by Salisbury and Joseph Chamberlain, Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain, and

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Macmillan and Butler – though which of the last pair is which is anybody's guess; it would be as true to say that Macmillan, like Disraeli, cunningly combined both strands in himself. The book ends at 1965 when 'in the triumph of Edward Heath, Peelism triumphed absolutely over the spirit of Disraeli'. This was a Bad Thing. Dr Ramsden's implication, which Lord Butler in his epilogue explicitly endorses, is that between 1965 and 1974 the party, carried away by Ted Heath's unsentimental quest for mere efficiency (what about the romance of Europe?) forgot its traditions and came deservedly unstuck. Peel is still unloved, despite Professor Gash, and poor old Ted has now been dispatched to the same chilly corner of the party pantheon. All good Tories now look to Mrs Thatcher to stick Humpty together again. Difficult though it is to see the Iron Lady as a Disraelian romantic, we can be quite certain that the shade of the old charlatan will be much invoked this week at Blackpool.

Russell Davies

The Dic

Caught in the Web of Words by K. M. ELISABETH MURRAY *Yale* £6.95

This splendid biography is a rarity. In the middle of it, a man turns into a book. Mind you, it is something he has been threatening to do all along: ever since page 10, to be precise, where it is recorded that James Murray of Denholm, near Hawick, Roxburghshire, approached his baby brother's cradle for the first time bearing a reading primer, and offering to show the infant 'round C and crooked S'. This incident becomes properly remarkable when you realise that baby brother was born in 1838, whereas the instructor James had come into the world on February 7th of the previous year. Plainly this was a child who would have swallowed a dictionary, had there been a decently scientific one available. His later life's work was to make good the deficiency.

Murray may not have acquired riches, but at least he began among rags of a kind. R. W. Burchfield, editor of the present-day Supplement to Murray's Oxford English Dictionary, remarks in his Preface:

> As the son of a village tailor and of the daughter of 'the only man in Hawick who could produce the finest table linen at that time', it is natural to think that young James Murray might perhaps in due course have become a draper.

Quite so. (It is also natural, perhaps, to hope that people with a passion for strictness in etymology will arrange words in shapes rather more pleasingly grammatical than Mr Burchfield's – but never mind.) A schoolmaster, inevitably, is what Murray became; though when his young wife Maggie proved consumptive, he had to bring her south, and take up a City post with the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, who could make use of his languages. These he had, by this time, in some abundance. Extracts from his application to join Printed Books at the British Museum are enough to prove the point:

> I possess a general acquaintance with the languages and literature of the Aryan and Syro-Arabic classes . . . With several I have a more intimate acquaintance as with the Romance tongues, Italian, French, Catalan, Spanish, Latin & in a less degree Portuguese, Vaudois, Provencal and various dialects. In the Teutonic branch, I am tolerably familiar with Dutch . . . Flemish, German, Danish. In Anglo-Saxon and Maeso-Gothic my studies have been much closer . . . I know a little of the Celtic, and am at present engaged with the Sclavonic, having obtained a useful knowledge of Russian. In the Persian, Achaemenian Cuneiform & Sanscrit branches, I know . . .

and so on. The Museum turned him down. Did they misread into all this the braggard tones of the deluded autodidact? No, it was just a certain Trustee, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was backing another candidate.

After Maggie's death, James Murray remarried and found a new life at Mill Hill School. His prodigious spare energies – men who sleep as little as Murray often seem to have extra stamina as well as extra waking hours – he now devoted not to archaeological and naturalists' clubs, such as the ones he had dazzled in Scotland, but to the Philological Society. Here were men almost as formidable as he – men able, at any rate, to make up in the flamboyance of their eccentricities what they lacked in scholarly application. Frederick J. Furnivall, the Secretary, was an excellent old beard who sold books in aid of wood-cutters on strike, taught grammar in the Working Men's College (where he supported the admission of women), and even 'invented a new type of rowing boat, formed a women's sculling club and used to row up the Thames to Richmond every week till he was 75'.

It was Furnivall, when the time came, who sought to persuade the Atlantic publishing alliance of Macmillan's and Harper's that the Philological Society's idea of a dictionary – a 6,000 page work – would make business sense. But the partnership took fright, and so terms were offered to the Delegates of the University Press at Oxford. 'Delegates', by the end of his life, must have been the nearest thing to a swear-word that Murray allowed himself. For Murray, of course, was the nominated editor. A so-called scriptorium of corrugated iron was built in his Mill Hill garden. Murray disappeared into it, wearing, as always for work, his first academic black cap, awarded by Edinburgh University.

His life thereafter was measured out in slips of paper: at first, the mass of rotting or irrelevant ones he inherited from the very variable groundworkers of the Phil. Soc., spread over Europe; later, the thousand upon thousand of neatly pigeon-holed bundles assembled by his own team. Murray's move to Oxford, and a larger scriptorium, only brought him nearer to the Delegates, with their crass insistence on output and their perennial inability to see how demanding were the 'Historical Principles' on which the Dictionary had been based. Idiotic attempts were made to get Murray to state how long, in pages, the work would eventually be. Six times the size of Webster? Eight? Nine? As though this were something Murray could own up to, if pressed hard enough. The pay agreement he suffered under for decades was a ridiculous *ad hoc* embarrassment.

Murray's beard became very white. But the work edged forward along the alphabet, with the help of a couple of new Editors, and the Editor-in-chief became – what he had always been considered by some – a curiosity. Visitors, trippers almost, were courteously shown around the working scriptorium, and Murray, who did everything thoroughly, often had to make explanations himself. (He likewise could not stop himself answering written queries from dotty old ladies with a devastating point-by-point refutation of implications they didn't realise they had raised.) But the dictionary, meanwhile, grew into that most imposing of cliché paradoxes, a Living Monument; and Murray, who deserved a similar title, died in honoured old age with the work in sight of its end.

As an account of academic toil at its most thorough and useful, the present book, by Murray's granddaughter, is nothing short of inspiring. Its final chapter even manages to put some flesh back inside the papery skin of its hero, by describing his undoubtedly full family life (eleven children: when strung out behind him on the way to Sunday morning chapel, they were known as 'The Dic and the little Dics'). But areas of speculation and wonderment remain. First, as to the psychological origins of Murray's fanatical curiosity – which obviously predated his formal education, yet was surely so exceptional as to disqualify Miss Murray's claim that 'equality of opportunity . . . existed in a different form in the nineteenth century'. And secondly, as to his attitude to language, the strange phenomenological spirit in which he approached its sound and structure, while shunning so many works of imagination in which it was actually used, Murray had no time for intoxicants, and seems to have classed among them most modern novels, plays and poems.

He was a scientist. 'I am interested', he said, 'in that branch of Anthropology which deals with the history of human speech.' And in this stern claim one can just glimpse a trace of that indefatigable literalness of mind, that vital un-imagination, which showed in Murray's childhood when he was taken to the Anglo-Scottish border. Standing astride the ditch which marked the line, Murray could not understand why the land was not differently coloured on either side, as it had appeared on the map. It really does take all sorts to document a world. The man with no taste for analogy will compile the dictionary; and the man who lives in images will be restrained by its definitions.

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Rosemary Dinnage

Fallen Women

The Dark Angel: Aspects of Victorian Sexuality by FRASER HARRISON *Sheldon Press* £6.50

Anyone, especially any woman, who has been induced by Masters and Johnson or *Cosmopolitan* magazine to worry about the attainment of the perfect sex life should give some thought to the picture of the Victorians painted by Fraser Harrison in *The Dark Angel*. It was, after all, such a short time ago, and yet even Concorde, television, and the theory of relativity hardly sunder us more totally from our great-grandparents than their attitudes to marriage and chastity. How naturally we empathise with the characters of the great Victorian novels until the plot touches on courtships, betrothals, the safeguarding of reputations; then our 20th-century disbelief is as instantly suspended as if we were reading about medieval Lapland.

Mr Harrison has nothing particularly new to add to what is already known about the relations between men and women in the Victorian age, but it would probably be unfair to accuse him of simply cashing in on two fashionable subjects, sex and Victoriana – in spite of the jacket depicting a languorous classical Alma-Tadema nude contemplating what looks like an early Roman vibrator. From novels, memoirs, and the pioneering sociologists he has diligently filled in the familiar but still extraordinary picture of an age that split the concept of the feminine more violently into two than any other period: the good woman far above the male in nobleness of nature – and the bad, fallen (the work perhaps of five minutes), and thereafter to be bought for a shilling.

Around the middle of the century, when a middle-class girl's reputation was compromised if she went unchaperoned or allowed more than a chaste kiss on the cheek, London was estimated to have had about 6,000 brothels (one house out of every 60) and 80,000 prostitutes, not counting the enormous number of very poor working-class women who turned to part-time prostitution when necessary. The legal age of consent to intercouse was finally raised, in 1875, to 13, after much opposition. For the cheaper girls a silk handkerchief, which could be pawned, was an acceptable fee. The virtuous woman, meanwhile, the angel in the house, was legally for all practical purposes her husband's personal property and until 1884 could, in theory, be imprisoned for refusing conjugal rights.

As the author tells the story, it seems that what we would consider ordinary sexual pleasure must have been rather rare, for men and for women, for rich and for poor: the good woman, by upbringing and social consensus having no sexual urges; the working-class woman sharing her bed with the youngest children and an often drunken husband; the young men either struggling miserably against vicious propensities or buying skivvies in the alleys of the East End. Were the prosperous married gentlemen, free from the tyranny of the vapours or the scrubbing-brush and incontinently fathering babies in the suburbs, the only ones to taste a little physical happiness? The truth is that in these matters we do not really know: Mr Harrison's analysis of the rich or the poor woman's 'attitude towards her body' is at worst guesswork and at best a venture in anthropology. Perhaps things were sometimes better, or just rather different, than we can now imagine. We may for comparison look back to Boswell in the rude 18th century, compulsively rogering girls whom he nevertheless regarded quite kindly, and looking forward to his wedding night because 'two friends do not become less so by drinking a bottle of champagne together'.

Where Mr Harrison is on sure ground is in his description, genuinely documented by Booth, Mayhew and Rowntree, of the unspeakable poverty of lower working-class life and of its relation to prostitution. Cheaply as they offered themselves – for every *grande horizontale* like 'Skittles' there were a thousand 'tuppeny uprights' – the wonder is that any girl chose virtue and life in the sweatshop at 2½d per shirt when she could earn a week's utterly inadequate wages in half an hour. However often the story of Victorian urban poverty is told it never ceases to shock: the underground kitchen occupied by seven people and a dead child no one could afford to bury; the water butt serving a whole tenement where a dead cat floated for weeks; the fetid outdoor privy for a hundred or more people; the roaming homeless children living on their wits and sleeping in doorways. Without blinding us with Marxism, Mr Harrison anchors Victorian sexual conventions firmly to economic bases: with the increased wealth and status of the bourgeoisie it was more necessary than ever that the good woman be preserved in all her purity, both as a conspicuous symbol of ownership and as a safe channel for the inheritance of property; while the poor and therefore often 'bad' woman not only supported the lady by her labour but was 'a sewer down which middle-class men could flush extraneous sexual energies'. It is a very ugly picture indeed. The rest of the story – that the tendency to split femaleness into 'good' and 'bad' is as old as history, as we see, for instance, in the Christian tradition – does not come within the author's scope.

Among this week's contributors:

JOHN CAMPBELL is the author of *Lloyd George: The Goat in the Wilderness.*

JOHN STURROCK's *Paper Tigers: The Ideal Fictions of Jorge Luis Borges* will be published next month by Oxford.

FREDERIC RAPHAEL is at present collaborating on a translation of the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus which is to be published and also shown on BBC television next year.

JOHN MORTIMER's translation of Feydeau's *Lady from Maxim's* opens at the National Theatre next week.

PHILIP CAPUTO

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Clancy Sigal, New Society

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Ian Wright, Guardian

'A superb evocation . . . it is hard to remember that this is not a novel'
William Shawcross, New Statesman

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Frederic Raphael

His Nibs

Somerset Maugham by ANTHONY CURTIS
Weidenfeld £6.50

There are, I suspect, two main reasons for the uncertain reputation of Somerset Maugham. First, he tends to excite such excessive admiration in the young that in their maturity they wonder scathingly what can have induced such intemperate adulation. The second reason is that Maugham is not, as they say, 'teachable'. He may be read with pleasure and with a modest measure of instruction, but he lacks a metaphysic of a kind which literary critics are liable to find much devious joy in unravelling. Empiricism is the philosophy of banality, and Maugham, with his mundane diligence, was a man who liked to see things for himself. He was literally a journeyman, not a pundit. His prose, as Edmund Wilson famously observed, evinced 'an unfailing inability to put anything in an individual way'. His penchant for clichés hardly needs to be remarked again, though I have a notion that he used them with artful deliberation, as devices for making the reader feel at home and so leading him, as Anthony Curtis puts it, down the garden path.

Even on its own terms, however, Wilson's charge does not quite stand up, for the fact is that Maugham was conspicuously 'individual'. If he had no gift for the poetic flight, as he himself acknowledged, can one read more than a few lines of his supposedly grey and featureless stuff without being conscious of a singularly recognisable tone? His reputation suffered a heavy fall in the Fifties, when the New Criticism was novel, and was not likely to recover in the Sixties, when experimental aesthetics and opinionated ideologies depreciated the orthodox and anathematised the conservative. Even now, if there is some evidence of his reputation having, as it were, bottomed out, he remains in literary circles the kind of embarrassment he always was. It may today be proper for writers to moan about money, but they are still not supposed to make any and Maugham made an awful lot. In addition, he was cosmopolitan, and the English literary establishment likes to have you corralled within its parish; Byron once remarked that the first man to go leaves his reputation behind him. Maugham went, and his long disparagement was partly the consequence.

Mr Curtis, in his *The Pattern of Maugham,* was one of the first to take Maugham seriously again, along with Robert Calder, who is, I believe, now engaged on the cull for a full biography. He will not have an easy time. Maugham was a cunning adversary of those who might wish, as he feared, to exhume his full corpus and dissect its more private parts. He burned masses of material in those notorious bonfires of which Mr Curtis gives a graphic account. He also destroyed a fat bundle of Ashenden stories, for silly fear that their publication might render him, even in old age, liable to prosecution. Paranoia is, perhaps, never far from a writer's mind; it seems almost to have overwhelmed poor Willie.

For instance, in what appears to have been a taped interview, A. S. Frere, for many years Maugham's publisher, alludes to the Old Party's terror, in his eighties, that someone was going to leap out of the shadows and stab him in the back. Had he known how little stigma would be attached to homosexuality in the present decade, indeed what dignity would come to be conferred on writers whose gifts were scarcely superior to his, simply because their sexual proclivities could now form the basis of long biographical exegesis, he might have mused ironically on the deferred dividends to be derived from indiscreet treasures and made sure that his place in the pantheon was preserved by a posthumous parade of the skeletons he preferred to clear so thoroughly from his cupboards.

Not, of course, that he succeeded; he was, for all his modesty, too much of an exhibitionist to bring that off. His affairs were always well-known, at least among the well-known, and a man cannot write, however artfully, for all those years and leave no clue. His work was inevitably stained with revelations, if only because of the obsessive pains he took to erase them. Yet the biographer labours under a sense of grievance: one has heard so much and the reliable record is irritatingly slight. Maugham's long life is a subject for short books. I have written one myself, very much in the style (as I fondly supposed at least) of Maugham's own essays on famous novelists. In the best tradition of literary vicious circles, Mr Curtis reviewed my book and here I am reviewing his. Alroy Kear, of *Cakes and Ale,* would have warned me that Mr Curtis is a literary editor and that I should avoid crossing nibs with a man of such importance.

Mr Curtis was good enough, in his review, to say some amiable things about my book and I approached his without animus. There are, indeed, some excellent and trenchant things in it. He remarks, for instance, on the romantic trap which Maugham set for the unwary (amongst whom I must number myself) when he suggested that he visited Deauville at a time when Boudin was actually hawking his pictures to indifferent holidaymakers, whereas that artist was already successful before the young Maugham could have set foot on that once-fashionable beach. He also notes shrewdly that Maugham may have married Syrie for no more devious a reason than an empiricist's desire to have experienced marriage; one never knows what one is missing until one has had it. Mr Curtis is genuinely enthusiastic about Maugham's work (he can even persuade himself that *The Painted Veil* somehow 'anticipates' *The Heart of the Matter*) and he and his helpers have found some splendid photographs and reproductions of the portraits Gerald Kelly and others were so eager to paint and draw of that ugly face. But Alroy Kear was right, for I cannot really admire this book and I should have known better than to review it.

It is written in a graceless style and it is so sprigged with infelicities that you would think they were in fashion. Where inelegance is lacking, Mr Curtis may rely upon the printers to supplement his lumpy style with clumsinesses of their own. Thus we have a French writer called Marcel Schowb (twice) and a tale of 'seige'; Phileas Finn goes round the world in 80 days and 'whom' is the subject of a relative clause, as is 'whose' in another passage. Le Chat Blanc, where Maugham met Aleister Crowley, is darkened, in a later page, to Le Chat Noir and such is the proliferation of oddities that Mr Curtis's credentials almost cease to be believable and his enthusiasm becomes more feverish than infectious. He is kind enough to quote a visit of mine to Maugham, but accuses me, with an excess of that same kindness, of having been the recipient of the Maugham Award, when in fact I was never anything so grand. On the other hand, Mr Curtis includes among Maugham's postwar honours his being made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, which is a pretty enough compliment in its way, but scarcely worthy of elaborate mention: in fact Maugham was made a Companion of Literature by the RSL, a distinction somewhat more exclusive.

It is a pity that Mr Curtis's advocacy should be marred by such a succession of petty inaccuracies and maladroitnesses though I am sure that Alroy Kear would be the first to say that they do not suffice to spoil the enjoyment of a very amiable and unpretentious performance.

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Peter Jenkins

The Stupid Party

Inside Right: A Study of Conservatism by IAN GILMOUR *Hutchinson* £5.95

What John Stuart Mill called 'the stupid party' does not take too kindly to intellectuals, and it is bold of Sir Ian Gilmour to place his career at risk by writing an intellectual book about Conservative politics. 'Brainy fellow that Gilmour,' you can hear them muttering at the Carlton in tones which suggest that he is plainly disqualified from actually governing the country. Gilmour's earlier book (*The Body Politic*, 1968) was an elegant scholarly account of the British system of government, moderate and generous in its tone. His new work is a much noisier affair and is already causing a stir in Tory circles. Since 1968 Gilmour has changed his mind in one very important respect. He can no longer regard the Labour Party with any kind of equanimity. Indeed he believes it to have shifted so drastically to the left that it can no longer be regarded as an acceptable constitutional partner in the functioning of two-party government which, he believes, requires a high degree of political consensus. However, the controversy among the ranks of the Conservatives is due not to dissent from polemic against socialism but because the cunning construction of the book does not wholly disguise, even from members of the stupid party, that the main thrust of his argument is against the Thatcher-Josephite stance of the Conservative Party.

For me, the most telling part of the whole book is Gilmour's devastating attack on Hayekian liberalism. It is not hard to imagine who he has in mind as he sets about his work. Systems, Gilmour argues, have no place within the Conservative tradition. Systems tend towards tyranny, and in the case of Marxism-Leninism, inevitably produce it. But liberalism is itself a system and hence alien to conservatism. Hayek's *The Constitution of Liberty*, a much-quoted book these days in Josephite circles, starkly reveals the great gulf between conservatism and liberalism. Reading the book one almost feels that liberalism is conservatism dogmatised, and therefore distorted. He goes on to quote Hayek's own admission that his position differs as much from conservatism as from socialism.

Gilmour does not argue that tyranny is endemic in liberalism, as in Marxist socialisms, but that it is liable to provoke resentments which will open the way to tyranny. Consent, the essential condition of free government, needs firm material foundations. 'Complete economic freedom', he writes,

> is not therefore an insurance of political freedom; indeed it can undermine political freedom. Economic liberalism, because of its starkness and its failure to create a sense of community, is liable to repel people from the rest of liberalism.

Having in this way sought to demolish the ideological basis of the Josephite approach, Gilmour next tries to show that it is bad politics and bad tactics. Sir Keith, of course, is not actually mentioned. The further Labour shifts towards the left the more vital it is, says Gilmour, that the Tories should win elections. For that purpose a moderate, non-ideological stance is the best. Moreover,

> the fundamental concern of Toryism is the preservation of the nation's unity, of the national institutions, of political and civil liberty, and not the achievement of some ideological victory.

In the British two-party system he thinks that each party must accept some responsibility for the behaviour of the other. He suggests that the apparent rightward shift of the Tories in 1970 may have played a 'very small' part in furthering the 'disastrous' leftward lurch of the Labour Opposition from 1970 to 1974.

This brings us to his second polemical set piece. In this one he attempts to demolish the social-democratic position. He lams into social democracy on two scores: it is ideologically subversive and it has formed craven unholy alliances with overt enemies of freedom. He explains in a footnote that this chapter was written before Anthony Crosland's death and that since then personal references have been removed. It is pretty plain, however, that the chapter was intended as a massive attack on Crosland as well as on Croslandite 'revisionism'. The attack on the ideology of social democracy is directed at its cardinal point, its insistence on the pursuit of equality. Gilmour challenges the social democrats' practical adherence to their egalitarian creed and baits them with their second houses and black ties. This passion for equality is not only bogus, he argues, but inimical to the efficient working of the economy, breeds envy, and is incompatible with liberty. As for the social democrats themselves, Gilmour believes them to have behaved with 'ignominy and cowardice'. He presents them as fellow travellers down a road to socialism at the end of which lies what has happened in Russia. The role of the social democrats since Gaitskell's death, he could have said, has been to 'trim, trim and trim again.' He presents an extremely harsh indictment.

Gilmour believes Labour's shift to the left, aided and abetted by fundamental inconsistencies in the social-democratic approach and the cowardice of its exponents, has come to pose a threat to constitutional government. This has caused him to change his mind in favour of proportional representation (something to which Mrs Thatcher is totally opposed) which he now considers to be a necessary bulwark against socialism. For the same reason he favours the politics of coalition. His chief message to his own party, however, is that it is the duty of Conservatism to fill the hole in the middle left by the collapse of British social democracy. The book is an attempt to demonstrate that his own style of moderate Toryism – highly pragmatic and unideological, politically responsive and socially sensitive – is not just another brand of pale pink socialism but the best defence

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DUCKWORTH

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against the socialist threat to our liberty.

Anyone with an interest in politics will enjoy this elegant and stimulating work and not least its wealth of allusions. Its chief importance lies in its attempt to redefine the politics of the centre in the absence of any serious attempt by the Labour revisionists to revise their revisionism. But Gilmour's case rests on the proposition that there has been some kind of sea-change in Labour politics since 1970, and it seems to me that he exaggerates the extent of Labour's leftward shift and misunderstands its nature, to the point of invalidating the chief premise of his polemic.

Between 1970 and mid-1975 the Labour Party was preoccupied with the great divisive issue of the Common Market. From 1971 when it voted with the Heath Government to enable Britain's accession to the Community, the social democratic wing of the party lived in a state of siege and was incapable of putting up serious resistance on any other front. Sir Harold Wilson's one purpose, other than self-vindication, was to hold the party together. This also involved patching things up with the trade unions who as well as being predominantly anti-Market were determined to ensure that the mistake of 'In Place of Strife' should never be repeated. Thus when the oil crisis hit in the autumn of 1973 the Labour Party was feebly led, badly split and unusually beholden to the unions. To be sure there had been some ideological tilt to the left, but the concessions and compromises which Gilmour deplores seem to me to be chiefly attributable to inflation and recession.

Inflation redistributed income and narrowed differentials more ferociously than anything done by Labour Government. Ministers did not dare to act against the wages explosion until after the Common Market referendum in July 1975. A growing sense of national failure born of persistent economic failure ate into national morale; the marxist minority and their intellectual fellow-travellers in the Labour movement thrived for a while on the fashionable notion of capitalist crisis. Once again, as in the Sixties, the social democratic position was undermined by failure to achieve the economic growth essential to the pursuit of their social priorities. From all of this I would draw less exciting conclusions than Gilmour does: first, that social democracy does not thrive in balance-of-payments crises or during world-wide recessions; second, that countries experiencing rapid inflation are exceedingly difficult to govern; third, that a combination of recession and near-hyperinflation is bound to be destabilising, impinge upon liberty and cause concern for the future of the political system.

Gilmour barely touches upon such questions. He does not really consider whether the state of affairs which he deplores is a kind of systematic deterioration, or merely brought about by Labour's derelictions. Nor does he make it clear whether he regards their socialism, which he asserts will lead to tyranny, to be the cause or the effect of the society's ills. I have no difficulty whatsoever in agreeing that Gilmour's brand of conservatism would be less likely to finish off the system than Mrs Thatcher's or Sir Keith's. I can understand his need as a practising politician to define his position in sharp contradistinction to that of his fellow centrists on the other side. But his critique of social democracy, although in many respects telling, only stands up if we allow him to get away with what he is quick himself to spot in others, the tendency to push arguments to their logical extreme and beyond.

John Sturrock

'Words'

Sade Fourier Loyola by ROLAND BARTHES translated by Richard Miller *Cape* £5.95
Image-Music-Text by ROLAND BARTHES translated by S. Heath *Fontana* £1.50
Roland Barthes: a Conservative Estimate by PHILIP THODY *Macmillan* £8.95

Sade, Fourier and Loyola all had in mind better worlds than this, worlds in which there would be, respectively, no end of sex, of harmony and of God. They are fanatics and their books make thin, monotonous reading. You would need to be horribly frustrated, like their unlucky author, to identify with the sexual stakhanovites who go at it hammer and tongs – *with* hammer and tongs, I shouldn't be surprised to be told, in some unvisited corner of that overgrown oeuvre – in the very specialised country-houses dreamt up by the Divine Marquis during his years in the Bastille; and you would need to be unusually jaundiced about the chances for our existing polities to tolerate for long the kindly but profitless whimsies of Fourier, a dreamer after an impossible fraternity between human beings and the systematic gratification of all our competitive desires. Nor, in these secular times, would many of us bank on getting an answer were we to practise the drill laid down by St Ignatius for conversing directly with the godhead.

What, then, are these three more than a little mad, amateurish authors doing as the subject of a book by Roland Barthes? The short answer is that they are proving his point (and proving it rather well) that if we forget for a moment the vast and emotive matters they were writing about, and attend instead to the form their writings take, all three are strangely alike. Moralists may bridle at the thought of the corruptive Sade, whose books are a true encyclopedia of criminal debauchery, sharing even a literary technique with Loyola, the intransigent holy man. Barthes would like them to bridle. He has put the saint together with the sinner, and both with the anarchist Fourier, the better to display the provocative neutrality of the structuralist, who can take the same tools, to the same good effect, to all three of them.

So this is Barthes the urbane technician, showing how the books of Sade, Fourier and Loyola are made. His three subjects are all what he calls 'logothetes', or founders of languages. This has nothing to do with their having found their own 'style', a word which (and how I am with him) Barthes stopped using years ago. He means, more interestingly, that their works – the *120 Days of Sodom* equally with the *Spiritual Exercises* – are constructed on the same basic principle as a language. They can be split up into their individual 'words' and 'sentences', the second being always unique combinations of the first. Sade's is the strictest, most blatant language of the three. Its 'words' are human bodies and its 'sentences' the quite unnatural variety of conjunctions between human bodies of which Sade's imagination and prose never tire. This is the grammar of sadism, and its inventor has tried – it is one test of the good logothete – to see that it is exhaustive, that he has left as it were no erotic sentence unspoken. Sperm and speech flow to one and the same set of rules.

There is no need to have read far into Sade to enjoy the logic and vitality of Barthes's essay on him. It is one of the most bracing he has written, full of ideas and of casual literary heresies. Like Sade, Barthes loves to go too far, to the extreme of pretending that the excesses of the pornographer are syntactical not moral, that given his system he was bound to compose scenes we find unpleasant; or that we can read Sade with pleasure, for all his sameness, if we think of him as a structuralist rather than the traditional sewer. Not true, but Barthes wouldn't be Barthes without some of these calculated extravagances.

Sade Fourier Loyola is a book I recommend, though I am nervous about doing so in this dire translation, where the English keeps sinking to the shamelessly literal, as well as to anachronisms – 'delivery vans' in Fourier's Paris? – and anatopisms – 'meadows' in Morocco? A pity the job didn't go to Stephen Heath, who knows Barthes's rich and difficult French so well that he can write it himself. The translations of *Image-Music-Text* are much more mature, and the book itself, Heath's very enterprising selection of essays on all kinds of cultural items, from the Book of Genesis to Japanese puppets, is the best and cheapest introduction so far to Barthes's career as the slayer of contemporary myths.

If, that is, we want such an introduction: Philip Thody would say we don't. His 'conservative estimate' isn't exactly against Barthes (I wish it had been – a spot of nastiness would have jollied it up), whom he allows to be clever and occasionally even right about literature. But as a conservative, and an Englishman, Thody thinks it has all been done before, that the French New Criticism is no more than the old Anglo-American New Criticism, that the essence of Barthes is there for the asking in the much simpler writings of William Empson or L. C. Knights. Perverse stuff, coming from a professor of French: the argument is a familiar one, however, and false. Some ideas are common to Barthes and Empson, many more are not. But Thody goes dead against the whole drift of Barthes by circumscribing the meaning of what he has written, as if his life's work amounted to some half-dozen none too fresh axioms. Barthes insists, more generously, that meanings are a property of language not persons, that they proliferate far beyond our intentions when we write and that the more of them we find as readers the happier we should be.

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Valentine Cunningham

Anti-F

Who Goes There? by BOB SHAW *Gollancz* £3.95
The Slave Girl by BUCHI EMECHETA *Allison & Busby* £3.95
Silken Eyes by FRANCOISE SAGAN translated by Joanna Kilmartin *Deutsch* £3.25
The Real Thing: Seven Stories of Love edited by Peggy Woodford *Bodley Head* £2.95

As future shock is increasingly what you jolt against over your cornflakes, so fiction and science fiction nowadays look more and more alike. Certainly in Bob Shaw's case SF reads like F, indeed – compliment of compliments – like anti-F. Not that we aren't, of course, handed enticing dollops of on-the-line sci-fi tricks and pranks, futurist popcorn to be nibbling on with. Warren Peace, our space legionnaire hero, shuttles about the galaxies by means of non-Euclidean tachyon displacement, slumps disconcertingly on to time-machine loo seats, leaps into battle on anti-gravity boots, has his memory wiped (he joined the legion to forget, didn't he?) by an electro-psycho engram eraser, and so on. He even totes a ray-gun.

An unbelievable kit-bag of traditional devices, you reflect? Bob Shaw is with you: this is only science fiction, the fiction insists, self-subverted by sending itself up. There's Peace, glad to be without a respirator in a high-tar battle zone on Ulpha, and punning Ryan ('The way he talks about Armageddon you'd think it was the end of the world'), and the planet that's full of antagonistic beasts – electric snakes, skull-peckers, multichews that bite your balls, and the musically minded restaurant serving Minuet Steaks with Sonata Ketchup. Also creditably, subversion goes further still. Peace's plight is logically circular: deserting the legion to try and discover what he's been made to forget he comes on his old self trying to join the legion to forget his crime of deserting the legion. A Robbe-Grilletesque model of enclosing fictionality, in fact. And when Peace eludes logic, it's only an escape into more SF. Demonstrably, fictiveness upon fiction upon science fiction. No anti-novelist could strive more to prove the novel mere ludic artifice.

Buchi Emecheta is a Nigerian novelist who also writes novels – not just that hybrid stuff, Commonwealth English Literature. To be sure, there is somewhat more of the footnote's pong in *The Slave Girl* than one recalls infecting her last novel *The Bride Price*: here's more than enough earnest filling in of detail about the Benin massacre, age-groups and dance-groups, birth practices and beliefs about the dead, to remind you that this is fiction written away from home. Once this ruckle is got over, though, the story of Ojebeta, an Ibo girl-child sold to a wealthy aunt by a greedy brother when their parents die, makes a compelling read. As usual, Buchi Emecheta generates a fine sympathy with human distress: she writes with a warmth of human sentiment cheeringly unabashed at being caught out in sentimentality. More coolly, she inspects the missionary endeavour, as Ojebeta's owners become Church Missionary Society Christians and trawl in the benefits of respectability and trading opportunities. Above all she raises the question of freedom within marriage in a society where slavery is supposed to have been abolished.

> A woman could be taken to church and a ring slipped on her finger – as easily as a piece of string can be put round a man's cattle to mark it out from another person's.

Chattel, cattle: this loving novel makes a telling indictment of pagan and Christian inhumanity to women.

How different, to say the least, is the world of Françoise Sagan's latest volume of stories. Here is an elegant and brittle art, a pricey collection of tiny figurines and minute porcelains, where passion and ageing must never be allowed to fall heavily among the stylishly placed bric-à-brac, and people are mannequins, stereotypes, puppets, the contrivance of whose making is given away from time to time by the odd lifeless judder of manipulation. These stories work best when the particular examples of the international set on display, with their Maseratis and Creed jackets and Dior dresses and smart houses in Paris, are continental. Shooting chamois and wanting to shoot your rival, flaunting gigolos, shooting yourself abstractedly, crashing your car deliberately, being bored and beautiful and in *Vogue*, seem much more fetching when a Jerome Berthier or Countess Josepha von Kraftenberg is involved. Like middling food and crumby movies these upper-class glossies are, as it were, all right in French. But when it's a case of Lord Stephen Timberley and Emily Highlife at Dunhill Castle, or a Millicent in Berkshire, or a Lady Brighton, all old Etonians or parents of Etonians, then the bogusness of their horrifically fashion-plate circumstance and of this kind of fiction's mode really do strike.

Happily more human in their response to emotion are *The Real Thing*'s seven stories about love. Naturally, they're a heterogeneous lot, almost as heterogeneous as traditional fiction itself (I mean, one is tempted to ask what stories are about if they're *not* about love). But they've been commissioned from practised hands, and, enterprisingly, apart from old Smoking Short Story William Trevor himself, from writers not instantly associated with the genre – like Emma Smith (who wrote *Maiden's Trip*), Rumer Godden, Lynne Reid Banks, and Rosemary (*Eagle of the Ninth*) Sutcliffe. As is expectable from the broad licence 'love' grants, there's plenty here for lots of tastes: a girl about to become a nun, an English master who's had a famous affair with a girl pupil, a girl whose French boyfriend has died, a *Liebestod* in the Bronze Age, and, most engrossingly skilful of all, Emma Smith's 'A Surplus of Lettuces', about a girl meeting again some childhood friends and realising just how they used her, cruelly heedless in a tight family solipsism.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Mortimer

'Playboy': The Young Codgers

There is no one so lonely as the Centrefold of *Playboy*. There she stands, before the misty, fluttering curtains of her bedroom window, or legs apart, soaking wet from the jacuzzi, with only the staple through her navel for company. She is invariably a strapping, athletic-looking girl, her T-shirt is pulled up, or her negligée pulled apart, to reveal well-filled mammary glands. Her lips are parted and there is, in her eyes, the sullen resignation of a Victorian lady forced, by unfortunate circumstances, to advertise her capabilities as a wet nurse. She is waiting for her lover.

He, of course, never intrudes on the Centrefold. But you know damn well where he is. He has recently attended the Congress of Rotary Brush Manufacturers in the Buffalo, Birmingham or Brisbane Hilton. His lightweight business suit still bears his name printed out on a neat plastic label pinned to the lapel (shall we say Henry P. Mackintosh, Executive President in charge of Foreign Promotions?). The suit itself is hung neatly on the dumb valet by the now somnolent TV. His drip-dry shirt is strung to the portable nylon washing-line over the bath, he has rubbed his shoes with the waxy paper the hotel provides, and put them neatly together. Having failed to strike up a meaningful relationship with the hostess at the Company Cocktail in the Versailles Room he is lying on the bed in little but his socks and boxer shorts. He is about to pay court to Miss Centrefold: the advantage to him of their friendship is that they'll never, in fact, meet. *Playboy* is a very lonely magazine.

The personality of *Playboy* can be further revealed by inquiring into the character of the 'Playmate of the Month' on whom a 'data' sheet is thoughtfully provided by the editors. Take, if you will, Julia Lyndon, known in real life as 'Miss August'. *Julia is 22 years old, weighs 112 pounds and* was born under the sign of Cancer. Her favourite performers are Vladimir Horowitz and Bobby Short. Her favourite composers are Gershwin, 'Tchaikovsky's 5th and Respighi's "The Birds" '. Her ambition (well naturally) is to be 'Chairman of the Board of my own Major Corporation'. It must be admitted that Miss Lyndon has about as much chance of achieving such a position as Henry P. Mackintosh has of appearing naked and wet from the jacuzzi with a staple through his navel on the Centrefold of *Playboy*: but nothing in the magazine is quite free of the business connection, or the loneliness. One Playmate gave as her favourite occupation a sudden, silent love affair with an unknown stranger who left before dawn: which is really no love affair at all – or merely one with Henry P. Mackintosh in the Baltimore Hilton with no accompanying sound but the turning of glossy pages, and his shirt dripping tiny nylon drops into the bath.

The cartoons in *Playboy* also specialise in persons in lonely situations – on desert islands, in gaols, brothels or at suburban orgies (surely no man can ever be so alone as on an island composed of a pile of naked neighbours vainly seeking each other's erogenous zones). A typical *Playboy* cartoon shows the Vice President in charge of Foreign Promotions with an imaginary naked playmate under the desk, giving him what the magazine insists (with its constant emphasis on things of the mind) on calling 'head'. 'It's OK, Sam,' the VP is telling his accountant over the phone, 'There's just nothing happening around here' – which, of course, there isn't.

Playboy also publishes interviews 'in depth' with many famous persons, including Barbra Streisand, Gary Gilmour (an interview from the death cell just past the Centrefold) and Jimmy Carter. President Carter must have endeared himself to the millions of *Playboy* readers when he spoke of his occasional sin of committing adultery in his heart. In their hearts, you feel from this particular magazine, is about the only place where their readers get it.

It is also true that *Playboy* has published fine, indeed great writers; including even Vladimir Nabokov. However, American magazines are so edited and given such a uniform personality that in, for instance, the *New Yorker* everything, from the latest story by John Updike to the advertisements for Chivas Regal, seem to have been written by the same carefully manicured hand. So in *Playboy* the canapé of Nabokov, even the snack of Jorge Luis Borges, seem part of the same meal of consumer desirables.

Once there was the Playboy Philosophy, endless writing on 'life' by the editor and publisher, Hugh M. Hefner (known to his devoted staff as 'Heff'). This feature got about as close to philosophy as fish fingers do to *sole normande*; but it has now been replaced by the 'Playboy Forum'. Readers contribute to the 'Forum' and it could add up to a statement of *Playboy*'s view of the modern world, if endlessly reiterated protests about the drug laws and the censorship of pornography can be dignified by such a title. *Playboy* also has its compulsive page of 'party jokes' which might have come out of some rather grubby crackers ('Our unabashed Dictionary defines *vagina* as a balled spot'); but the most compulsive reading is the 'Playboy Adviser'. It is no doubt the most important part of the magazine because in all the really vital areas of life (choosing hi-fi, ordering Burgundy in some continental Hilton without embarrassment, and oral sex techniques) it teaches Henry P. Mackintosh how to live.

There is no doubt that the 'Adviser', like the letters column in the *Daily Mirror*, is expert journalism. And as the *Mirror* readers are put right by the 'Old Codgers', the playboy in search of the full, rich life is given instruction by some editorial young codgers (and boy, are they swingers! 'We have just returned from our test bedroom and given your technique a 95, a good beat'). The advice column doesn't deal only with sex. 'All reasonable questions are answered,' boast the young codgers, 'from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette.' A reader's anxiety is set at rest on the question of vinyl record sleeves, or on eating aeroplane meals when *returning* from South America ('You are correct, standards of food care are not so strict in some countries as they are in the US'). You can be told what is the correct temperature for your pool (or even your jacuzzi – 110 to 112 degrees Fahrenheit), the odds on having your income-tax return audited and how deep to fill a wine glass. However, the 'Playboy Adviser' does provide astonishing evidence of its readers' habits. There is Miss K. H. of Chicago, Illinois, who always takes her vibrator on plane trips (the engines drown the drone) and a gentleman from Iowa who describes an astonishing sexual experience. As he lay in the bath a fly alighted on his penis. He removed the wings from the insect and returned it to the site where it walked round and round giving him a memorable orgasm. This macabre letter carried its own sad message: the 'Playboy' reader is a man from Iowa in a hotel bath with a wingless fly trudging unhappily round and round on its errand of limited pleasure

This is the first of a new series of articles on Magazines. Forthcoming contributions include John Braine on 'Car', John Carey on 'The World Wide Magazine', Eric Ambler on 'Scientific American', Brigid Brophy on 'The Freethinker', Michael Moorcock on 'Interavia', John Jones on 'Shoot!', and many others.

Television

Ian Hamilton

Psyched Out

Apparently, like so many earthly matters it all depends on whether or not you move in the right circles. This was the tartly ironic tone that prevailed throughout *Everyman*'s investigation into the marvels o spiritualism (BBC-1) and it made for a bracing, if perhaps too suavely mundane show. On display were all species of death defying middlemen: clairvoyants, clair audients, psychic portrait artists and psycho metrists (these are those who take some thing that belongs to you and deduc from its odd feel what kind of chap you are. Oh dear.) Peter France made it clea from the beginning that he was a scepti

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and that his intention was to unmask as many of the media as possible; he did a good enough job to deserve at least a minor thunderbolt.

He took us to seances and to spiritualist chapels at which cowed members of the congregation received threatening messages from long-dead mothers ('She'd like to bang your two silly heads together'): few seemed all that glad to be reunited with their dear departed, but their looks of panic served to convince us that they were convinced. France had better luck with the more modest by-ways of the profession: he got a psychic portraitist to draw his own dead mother and then raced off to one of those facsimilists who sit outside the National Portrait Gallery and asked him to identikit the old lady on the basis of his (France's) handsome features. Both secular and psychic pix were dead ringers for my granny – and, I'd hazard, yours.

Even more fun was to be had with the psychometrist. France gave her four objects, each with precise associations. The poor psycho didn't get one right, and we ended up feeling rather sorry for her as she laboured under our contemptuous gaze: 'This is a young life that's passed over – a weakness of the throat and chest – she might have been 11 or 13 – perhaps a young girl.' In fact the (obviously feminine) object belonged to France's wife's mother, who had died aged 35. A total flop, but oozing pathos. So much so that one was rather glad to see France overwhelmed a little later on by the rampant inventiveness of Rosemary Brown, the lady who is in touch with all the dead composers: 'Liszt is here. He has his head on my shoulder at this very minute. He lives in an exceedingly beautiful place now.' So did all the other music-makers she's in touch with: they all live in radiant splendour and get on famously with Jesus, who lives up the road and sometimes wears a beard but as often as not goes around clean-shaven, and – of course – v. radiant.

Some of the medium's ploys were sardonically analysed by a professional magician (start with the law of probability: everyone's got a scar on his leg, everyone knows someone called John; shake their hands – you can tell a lot about their health, their nerves), but it was interesting to note how tedious, by comparison, was BBC-2's hour-long *Magic Show* on Monday night. All those doves and hankies, and even a bullet-biting turn, but dull because you knew how they'd done it. Bogus or not, the success of the spiritualist is in persuading the audience that *no one* knows just how *their* stunts are pulled. Entertainment-wise, it makes a world of difference.

Showing us how the Tories pull some of their stunts was the object of *Tonight*'s pre-conference analysis (BBC-1). Tedious stuff, in the main, with lots of 'Where does the soul of the party lie?' interviews with old and young Tories, and much utterly familiar going on about the party's massive funds. Even the show's star item, a fly-on-the-wall view of the Shadow Cabinet in session, was embarrassingly strained and soppy. Thatcher is no thespian and in her wish to seem brisk came over as more headmistress-like than ever. She even started class with a calling of the register – 'Now we've got two people away today' – and then went on to fire horribly basic questions at the naughty boys. Quintin looked mischievous, Prior smirked (the teacher's pet), Carrington looked lofty (the old boy who has condescended to drop in for the day), and so on: you felt, though, that if Miss were once to turn her back they all had very inky pellets up their sleeves.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Tooooooot

Conference of the Birds by JOHN HEILPERN
Faber £5.95

No plays until next week, I fear. But the circumstances-beyond-my-control that have kept me out of the theatre at least leave me free to pay my obeisances to the furrowed, ruminating prophet who lately disappeared into the Sahara Desert at the head of a convoy of land-rovers, each bearing a brace or two of disciples. I mean, of course, Peter Brook.

Those chosen to share his locusts and wild honey included the following: Helen Mirren, variously described here as 'a bruised peach' and 'generous, bright, luscious, lost'; Lou Zeldis, 'tall as a windmill, vague as a giraffe, a striking bisexual'; Miriam Goldschmidt, 'wide-eyed like a child, devious as a cat'; Liz Swados, who 'has been known to have her unsettled moments, kicking sweet old ladies in the street'; Michelle Collinson, 'a perceptive, nice and easy paranoid'; Bruce Myers, who 'can be wild and frightened, just frightened of life'; Natasha Parry, alias Mrs Brook, 'fearful and tense, a stretched catapult tensed for failure'; and Ayansola, 'the crazed spirit of Africa, who played the talking drum and spoke no language that anyone else knew'. They were clearly an unlikely band of adventurers, the sort that could only have been assembled by Brook, that 'strange, restless man' with his 'deep and irresistible sense of chaos' and his desire 'to wake up on the other side of his identity'. John Heilpern once asked him what his greatest fault was, and 'there was a long, agonising silence during which he stared intensely into space, groaning slightly. "What," he replied at long last, "*is* a fault?"' It's a mystery how they all survived the sand, the bad food, the quarrels about who should do the washing-up, the scorpions, and each other.

Heilpern was the official historian, invited by the great man to chronicle the 8,500-mile trek, and his book has some of the failings of its genre. As his character-sketches suggest, he can write like a giddy schoolgirl with an indiscriminate crush on the senior common room. On the other hand, his account is undeniably vivid and absorbing, and by no means lacking in those philistine commodities it is necessary to clutch at when Brook hoves into view, namely common sense and humour. And there is certainly much here for connoisseurs of the absurd. Bruce Myers slips off and shins up a passing mountain, a perilous undertaking that eventually obliges everyone else to fan out into the desert and search for him. Once he has been found, Brook organises one of those inordinate, endless post-mortems he seems to find irresistible, whatever the place and circumstances. The actors begin to enjoy themselves, debating which bird-sound would be most likely to attract a lost colleague – an owl, a partridge, or a hoopoe? As they hoot and twitter there is a sudden, awful yell from one of the professional guides who accompanied (and were maddened by) the rampaging thespians: 'what a load of old *cobblers*!' And is Brook discountenanced? Not a bit. He simply summons the demented driver into the centre to say his piece, and, having politely heard him out, promptly starts discussing the relative merits of horn-noises: 'is it going to be toot-toot or toooooot?'

'Cobblers' would of course be an inadequate summing-up of the journey, but it must be admitted that the gap between its aims and its achievements was pretty substantial. Brook's hope was not just to communicate with people ignorant of Europe and its culture, but to travel by time-warp back to the golden age before Babel: to discover, or rediscover, a universal language consisting of 'essential action, essential sound, essential emotion'. In practice, however, this meant patching together the kind of stuff one might find in some rather dizzy London fringe theatre catering mainly for children: the *Box Show*, the *Ogre Show*, the *Bread Show*, the *Shoe Show*, and the *Walking Show*, which 'consisted of actors walking'. These were then relayed, with much ad-hoc improvisation, to gatherings of sometimes flattered, sometimes puzzled tribesmen. The group was kindly received in In Salah, flopped in Tamanrasset, absolutely bombed in Agades, put the audience to sleep in Gangara, did better in Dungung, was greeted by stunned silence in a village outside Kano, but triumphed in Kano itself, partly because an actor kept bellowing 'bullorga torga!': to him, a strange, primordial sound with a meaning beyond language to express, but to the snorting spectators very close to the Hausa word for the pudenda.

On they pressed into the heart of darkness, pausing for exercises that ranged from the frantic to the fey – one time, Heilpern found them all slumped in a bamboo grove, earnestly and somewhat symbolically stroking their own navels – and ending in the ancient Nigerian cities of Ife and Oshogbo. Here they at last performed *Conference of the Birds*, the piece they had been preparing before they left Europe. Perhaps it would have been a greater success if two years' work in Paris had managed to produce more than two minutes of finished play, and the rest had not had to be inspirationally flung together in Africa. As it was, it seems to have been yet another case of presenting a pretty desultory botch-up to a people with long cultural traditions and high accomplishments of their own in music, dance and mime: the story, I fear, of the trip. No doubt Brook and his followers learned something from it all. After a confrontation with the Peulh, nomad

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artists of (it appears) rare beauty, they even seem to have acquired a little humility. But I suspect they went home without properly digesting what was, surely, the main lesson to be culled from their endeavours: that a European who attempts to dispose of his upbringing, education, intellect, language, experience and history is attempting to dispose of his very identity, a foolish if not impossible aspiration. Better to reconcile yourself to what you are, and then build on it, than to allow your one-and-only mind to be seduced by slapdash appeals to antediluvian utopias.

Films

John Coleman

Theirs Truly

Padre Padrone (X) *Camden Plaza*
March or Die (A) *Columbia*
Demon Seed (AA) *Plaza 2; Ritz; ABCs Fulham Road and Bayswater*
The Adventures of the Wilderness Family (U) *ABC Edgware Road*

To the best of my knowledge, which is more limited than I could wish in their case, the Taviani brothers, Paolo and Vittorio, have made seven feature films and many documentaries, one of which found them collaborating with that acknowledged master, Joris Ivens. Of their features, *St Michael Had a Rooster*, first caught at the London Film Festival six years ago, still lingers most powerfully in the memory. The tale (of a rich young mid-19th-century landowner who suffers humiliation and imprisonment in the cause of the approaching revolution) and the telling of it (through bold camera-trickery as he chats to various images of himself in solitary; some marvellous, misty boat-shots in Venetian waters – by courtesy of a fine photographer, Mario Masini) achieved a rare, elegiac fusion. The latest film to be written and directed by the Tavianis, *Padre Padrone*, picked up the big prize at this year's Cannes, was made under the useful auspices of Italian television, once again treats – in the broadest sense – of a 'political' subject and once again has Masini as cameraman. This time his images, though generally striking, have a queasy graininess which tends to set the eyes on edge and the mind asking irrelevant questions.

Some answer may be provided by the story, which is essentially a true one, based on the near-autobiographical book by one Gavino Ledda, an illiterate Sardinian six-year-old as the film opens 30 years ago, being dragged out of a classroom by his father, his master, into a life of feudal serfdom, sheep-tending, dreadful beatings. How the lad finally escapes via military service and education is the continuing theme. A risky and entirely successful *coup de théâtre* starts the affair: the real, present-day Gavino (elsewhere played by Saverio Marconi) addresses us while peeling a stick which he then hands to his film-father (Omero Antonutti) who enters that fateful schoolroom with it. Audacities abound against the barren Sardinian landscape, with its rocks, its 'sacred' oaks, its boring menace, and most of them come off. At about 20, sad-eyed Gavino hears a Strauss waltz being played by a couple of itinerants; he kills two sheep in exchange for a battered accordion; this break-through into music is steadily reinforced by a score that incorporates something like Gregorian chant, local airs, even a snatch of Mozart. During a religious procession, the men beneath a swaying statue (whose face, for a second, becomes that of Gavino's father) talk brutally of sex and of escape to Germany. A sequence of bestiality and youthful masturbation leads rapidly into cuts of men mounting their women to the accompaniment of heavy sighs, a last overhead shot of the clustered houses of the village: this is out of Llareggub. Soldier Gavino trying out his Latin over a tank intercom to a studious friend is out of the Taviani brothers, utterly their own. They never let you settle idly in your seat.

Would as much could be said of Dick Richards's newest operation, *March or Die*. Here is a fellow of not undistinguished eclecticism: *The Culpepper Cattle Co.*, *Rafferty and the Gold Dust Twins* and the Mitchum *Farewell, My Lovely* are all his, can you believe it? Now we turn to an entry in the old-time death-or-glory stakes, the Foreign Legion in action shortly after World War I. Major Foster (Gene Hackman, all sour and cynical), an American forced to resign from West Point – I couldn't quite hear why, but that wasn't the only bit of dialogue to go missing, thank heavens – and a desert veteran, is ordered, against his grain, to protect an archaeological dig (headed by Max von Sydow of the Loovre) intent on disinterring a priceless tomb in Morocco. Foster thinks this is grave-robbing and had anyway made promises to tiny El Krim (Ian Holm), a powerful Arab chief concerned to unite people against the threat of French civilisation. To spoil things for you, I shall divulge that El Krim fights dirty and wins.

For an 'A'-certificated movie, there is more than a modicum of fighting dirty on both sides. Bodies are shot, stabbed, chucked overboard and staked out to die without much emotion on register: perhaps that blandness was reckoned the saving grace. Through this expensive-looking length of hokum, as through a glass darkly (who encouraged John Alcott to go so soupy and sepia whenever he shot indoors?), may be discerned blue-eyed Terence Hill as Marco the Gypsy, doing a beggar's Fairbanks Sr and making many a *beau geste*, several of them towards Catherine Deneuve – everybody's chilly sweetheart – who appears to have strayed in from some garden of Allah. Her hair always looks lovely. She says to Marco, 'Everything I love dies' and 'You don't belong here'. Those are two of the better lines.

Your reviewer has really been nipping about this week, picking up a rumour here, a snippet there. Otherwise, how would I be able to tell you that Donald Cammell's *Demon Seed* is variously known in the trade as 'Semen Deed' and 'Computer-Fuck'? To spell out the plot more laboriously, there is this magnificent machine called Proteus IV, largely the brain-child of scientist Alex Harris (Fritz Weaver), a man so bound up in his work he is about to lose his wife, Susan (Julie Christie). She will keep on their automated house for a while. But Proteus is itself a giant brain and refuses, when the chips are down, to perform tasks it deems bad for the ecological future. Instead, it decides to impregnate Miss Christie. 'All that I need to understand, Mrs Harris, is your body.' (The screenplay is credited to Robert Jaffe and Roger O. Hirson, taken from a novel by Dean R. Koontz.)

Plenty of psychedelic visuals are on display and there is a sort of trundling chair with a mechanical hand that does rather rapy-appearing things to Mrs Harris. A needle goes into her head and suchlike. She does her best to ward off the worst. But the synthetic spermatozoa are inserted and soon she is being shown 'this morning's gamma-scan of your womb'. She has already lost one girl-child to leukaemia and you must guess the outcome. Mr Cammell's virginity as a director (he worked, of course, with Nicolas Roeg on *Performance*) might better have stayed intact. Here we have an uncomely confusion of science-fiction, sex-ploitation and diabolic possession. Parents with an urge to misinform, and possibly bore, their children are advised to pack them off to Stewart Raffill's *The Adventures of the Wilderness Family*, which has young ma and pa Robinson and their two cute kiddies abandoning the smog of LA for the splendours and horrors of the Rockies. They *do* cope well.

Music

Andrew Clements

Gritty

Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra *Festiva Hall*

That the two most original symphoni thinkers after Mahler were both Scandi navian was not the result of any norther musical renaissance. Rather it is an indica tion of the thoroughness with which th symphony had been purged from the crea tive mainstream of European music in th first decades of this century. With th collapse of tonality, the hierarchy of ke relationships on which symphonic organisa tion depended became redundant. Bu Sibelius and Nielsen – seemingly immun to the pressures of historical continuit that drove Schoenberg towards his revc lution – were still able to write explorator works in unambiguously tonal idioms.] Sibelius's innovations have their only pri cedents in Beethoven, Nielsen was by cor trast almost eclectic, forging a person language from the examples of Brahms an his fellow countrymen Svendsen and Gad inflected with Danish folk elements.

Sibelius, of course, has long been popul

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in Britain. The cult which surrounded his music in the Thirties, when through the crusading of Constant Lambert and others he was hailed as the saviour of modern music and the humane alternative to the Second Viennese School, has now stabilised into steady familiarity. Nielsen has been less lucky, perhaps because he was too gritty a realist to offer pat affirmations in his symphonies. Neither a determined effort a quarter of a century ago, nor the centenary celebrations of 1965, has managed to carve out a niche for him in our concert programmes. A Festival Hall event containing two Sibelius symphonies is not unusual; the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra's admirable decision to include two by Nielsen on their visit, and those the least performed of the canon, the First and the Sixth, was a rarity indeed.

It proved to be the best possible service the DRSO could perform for its greatest native composer. Strangely it was the First Symphony that was more characteristic of the Nielsen familiar from his better known works. Written in 1892, its debt to Brahms is obvious in the cast of many of the themes and their interrelationships. There is even an occasional echo of Borodin, of all people, particularly in the slithering lyricism of the first movement's second theme. But most of the work could only have been written by Nielsen. His penchant for themes that oscillate around a central note is heard in the coda to the first movement, and the third movement's elaborate play of tonalities is built around a melody of the same kind. Even more personal is the use of tonality. The symphony begins in G minor and ends in C major. This progression is the basis of the whole work; throughout his career Nielsen was to make similar contrasts the major structural principle on which he built his symphonies. For a first attempt there is surprisingly little padding.

By the time Nielsen wrote the Sixth Symphony in 1924-25 he was a sick man and its composition was interrupted by illness. The first movement contains some of his finest music – at least on a level with the Fifth Symphony – and his technique of progressive tonality is at its most refined. But the rest of the work falls far below this level of achievement. The second movement is intended to be a sardonic humoresque, but appallingly miscalculates its humour; the third is a lachrymose adagio. Only the final set of variations comes anywhere near reconciling its composer's increasingly bleak vision of the future with the demands of cogent symphonic writing, and even here there is much that is wilfully undisciplined.

If the DRSO made a case of hearing either symphony more often it was for the First, although both performances were the best possible advocacy. It is a very capable band, a bit thin in the strings perhaps, but no more so than most British orchestras, and with unfashionably wide vibrato in the brass. For all his visual awkwardness, the conductor Herbert Blomstedt got a finely honed result. Although the concert also included two pieces of unabating tedium from contemporary Danish composers, it was a refreshing experience for a South Bank orchestral concert.

Rock Music

Mark Kidel

Hobbledehoy

Ian Dury *Exhibition Centre, Bristol*
'New Boots and Panties' *Stiff Seez 4* £3.49

As the stage lights came on, the music began – a mean guitar line repeated hypnotically over a funky jungle rhythm from the bass and drums. The tightly packed crowd of punk poseurs surged towards the source of the throbbing sound: the undulating beat was strangely infectious. A brief moment of breathtaking anticipation before the dramatic entrance of the lead singer . . . and then . . . what the hell was this? . . . From behind the back row of amplifiers, the boogaloo still pulsating away, there appeared a startling and totally unprepossessing figure, limping – in counterpoint to the music – towards the mike.

His large square head was shaved to a quarter inch stubble, apart from the very back which displayed greasy black curls, most probably the remnants of a previous hairstyle. He wore a small multi-coloured chiffon scarf incongruously knotted around his thick muscular neck. The rest of his clothing was drab, the sort of thing that might come off the shelves of a seedy second-hand shop on the wrong side of town. He was a small man, but broad, with one leg seeming much longer than the other. His movements were dislocated: as he stumbled to the front of the stage, it looked as though he might well fall straight off. As he grabbed the mike stand, he began to sing, in something half way between a sensuous whisper and a nasty growl, about the virtues of sex, drugs and rock 'n roll. Swaying around the microphone like a drunken Quasimodo, he rolled his eyes and smiled knowingly to himself. He came over like a happy-to-be-crazy sex maniac, the weird rock incarnation of a flasher.

Ian Dury is an eccentric, a very good singer and a totally original songwriter. He is also the most charismatic cripple in the business. He may never make the centre-spread of *Playgirl*, and neither will he reach the thousands who drool over the wholesomeness of Peter Frampton. He has, however, made the maximum out of his physical deformity: it is one of his greatest assets and the dominant element in his outrageous sexuality. It is also an important facet of the image he has built up for himself since he gave up his job as an art school lecturer several years ago to set up Kilburn and the High Roads, one of the earliest and best of the pub-rock bands. The creation is a work of living art: the unsavoury East Ender – a pimp or used-car dealer perhaps – with outlaw connections and bizarre tasks, a very different type from the lovable-huggable cockney popularised by the Small Faces.

Many of Dury's lyrics are about the underworld this curious character inhabits, songs about the sleazy Essex stud 'Billericay Dickie', who does it on the back seat of his old Cortina, and 'Plaistow Patricia', the sad young heroin addict from the Mile End Road. 'Blockheads', one of the highlights of his stage act, is a frenetic anthem to the *real* punks, the 'lawless brats from the council flats', the boys who terrorise the neighbourhood. 'Imagine finding one in your laundry basket/Or banging nails into your big black dog' he screams, suggesting that the blockheads might be a media-inspired fantasy blown up to horrific proportions in the minds of the law-abiding bourgeoisie, shadows of the imagination, as ambiguous as the weird freak of a figure Ian Dury presents on stage. All of these raw but excellent numbers are included on Dury's recently released album *New Boots and Panties*, his first as a solo artist.

The very best track of all, 'Wake Up And Make Love To Me', is a sensual and direct song about the joys of a pre-breakfast fling and 'that morning horny mood'. When he performed it in Bristol, he momentarily calmed down, his usual mania momentarily transformed into appropriate but disturbingly uncharacteristic softness. The sudden change in mood only enhanced the eroticism of the song. As soon as he had finished, the tempo changed, and the spaced-out dementia returned, building up to a frenzy for the end of the set. Ian Dury hobbled wildly around the mike stand, whipping it with his scarf; he then wrenched off the microphone and half swallowed it, with appropriate grunting noises. When the lights finally went down, the Bristol punks, who had quite forgotten about posing, clapped for a very long time.

Architecture

Andrew Saint

Church Going

Change and Decay *V & A; until 16 October*

Temporal change, for an institution so long in the tooth as the Church, is at heart something merely to be endured. So viewed, even the most venerable of its earthly structures are husks that may be built, embellished, abused and destroyed without harm so long as the faithful continue to germinate. For the secular mind, unsympathetic to the hustle and jostle of 'a thousand ages in Thy sight are like an evening gone', and pained by the shabbiness and decay of almost all our urban churches, there is still comfort to be got from this cyclical perspective. Recently I looked into a church in West London which the vicar had bashed about pretty crudely, doubtless to drum up Sunday attendances.. It resembled nothing so much as a medieval church rehashed by the Georgians, with whitewash slopped over Victorian stencilling rather than faded fresco, and grubby armchairs strewn about the kiddies' corner instead of the squire's pew and fireplace.

The Georgian secularising phase was

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temporary, and so may ours be, to judge from the strides that religious revival has made these last ten years in California, that touchstone for future *mores*. That is what churchmen are hoping, and why they are unlikely to take in complete earnest the message of Marcus Binney and Peter Burman's admirable exhibition at the V & A. Things will pick up, they convince themselves, if not in ten years then in thirty, until which time a minimum core of ecclesiastical plant has to be maintained by elders' hook or bishop's crook. If the upturn comes, however, the plant will be in the wrong places. Although in the rural areas there are still plenty of active churches, in the centres of population, churchgoing is close to extinction. The consequences are starting to follow: *Change and Decay* takes as an example Leeds, where after an avalanche of closure, vandalism and destruction all the central churches of all denominations are now shut. In London, just over 30 churches were demolished each year in the early 1970s, but 125 are expected to go this year. Beneath this tip, the iceberg of urban churches with problems is vast. Some simply decay while still in use, wanting funds for proper repair. Others are closed and inexorably vandalised during the lengthy period before official redundancy, owing to the C of E's bureaucratic ways. Yet others find alternative users, who are rightly prominent in the exhibition; but pickle warehouses and printing shops are commoner clients for old churches than libraries or museums, and rarely retain more than the shells. Few of these buildings can survive indefinitely, and none of the bodies for disused churches can afford either to guard or to maintain them.

Because Christians proclaim themselves savers of souls rather than of structures, it behoves others to help determine the future of our churches. Yet this is often resented by the clergy, who do not see why unbelievers should interfere with their arrangements if they do not share their objectives. After all, how can churches be properly kept up if severed from their purpose? There is no easy answer to the question. Undoubtedly, many urban churches will have to go as a consequence of irreligion. Yet almost equal damage has been done because clergymen have been arrogant about their goals and isolated from the larger community. In the cause of ecclesiastical progress, fittings have been swept away, tombstones uprooted and churches proscribed without the proper recording which is the least they are due. In this respect the exhibition is soft on those who have churches in their charge. The C of E gets ticked off, but the Roman hierarchy escapes, except for a short squib by James Lees-Milne (in the book of essays accompanying the exhibition) on the squalid treatment of Catholic church interiors since the Second Vatican Council.

What can be done to help churches? Money is the principal need, as *Change and Decay* hints rather too delicately. State aid has long operated in France and is beginning to trickle in here. The Redundant Churches Fund is partly financed from public money, and recently a modest sum has been allocated for the repair of historic churches. Staggeringly, church authorities have not yet taken much interest in this provision, perhaps because it erodes their independence. Yet if churches are to survive, some dependence must be admitted. Tourist revenue is an instance of what could be done. If churches are unwilling to charge admission because it smacks of the money-changer, municipalities could always do so, leasing back the buildings to their congregations, and applying the excess revenue to less-frequented churches.

Roy Fuller

Voluminous Art, Short Life

Wordsworth's poems arrive, in chronological order,
Hardy and Auden entire already on the table.
Friends and strange poetasters send me volumes much
Slimmer but somehow taking equally long to read.

I've decided at last to look into Hartley Coleridge;
And perhaps expose the myth that Hopkins' poetry
Had something to do with speech. What time for murder stories?
Even in the early nineteenth century (or so

I glean from Thomas Moore's journal) *Paradise Regained*
Was seen to have more supernumerary syllables
Than its predecessor. Memo: check this allegation.
A great sense of the potty, Moore: must *his* verse be ploughed through?

As is my habit I stick up on the kitchen wall
The cutting from *The Times* about the mensual sky.
It seems only yesterday that Venus was too near the sun
To be seen; and now she's showy in the early night.

Thus July merges into February for the old.
I glanced with most curiosity at the end of Wordsworth.
Lord Lyttleton, kicked downstairs for calling Lady Archer
A drunken peacock on account of her dress and rainbow feathers,

Had also rolled a piece of blancmange into a ball
And covering it with 'variegated comfits' pronounced:
'This is the sort of egg a drunken peacock would lay.'
But not long from Tom Moore's youth to Daddy Wordsworth's decay.

Weekend Competition

No 2485 **Set by Fatboy**

We know how much you love anagrams. Clive James once memorably relettered *Poldark* into Old Krap. Now do the same with any other TV programme. Maximum of 5 goes; by 28 October.

Result of No 2482 **Set by Tim Hopkins**

We asked you to imagine that the *Sunday Times* had managed to net genuinely eminent contributors for 'One Man's Week'.

Report **by Len the Unlucky**

I'm afraid I've got disappointing news for you. Despite the promise he made last week, Spiro Keats has D-noticed the names of the two recent Comp winners chosen by Kingsley Amis for his *Oxford Book of Light Verse*. I'm sorry, I did my best; I pleaded with him; I even, rather daringly, mentioned the word 'credibility'. He said he didn't care for the word; he was brooding, distant; he had, he said, other – larger – things on his mind. No, it wasn't this week's comp – he was very pleased with all of you, holding up seven fingers to indicate the size of your reward (for Camus, Hitler, Descartes and Stein). He merely mumbled the words 'Brighton' and 'Blackpool' in a pained lingering tone, and kept glancing at the phone. Was it about his holidays?

Monday
By chance, blew up Perpignan Airport killing 3,000 people including my mother. It was a gloriously sunny day and if it hadn't been for the fag of stepping over the mutilated bodies the walk back to the boat would have been quite agreeable. I whistled to myself, thinking about the way I moved my tongue to vary the notes, and my benign disinterest stretched out to the limbless corpses that were strewn over the runway.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Stayed in bed reading *The Ecstasy of Indifference* by Claude who plays on the left wing. Got half way through but couldn't be bothered to finish it.

Friday
Went to the beach with Marie. Very hot. Saw cripple kicking mangy dog. I wondered whether to stop the cripple and talk to him about happiness and money. I wondered whether to kill him or not, but didn't really feel in the mood for that. Perhaps tomorrow, after a swim. I put my head in Marie's lap and fondled her breasts. It was almost as good as whistling.

Saturday
Too busy living to think.

Sunday
Played in goal for Algiers Wanderers instead of going to mother's funeral. Nice sunny day. Can't remember the score.

ROGER PELLMAN

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Monday
Dinner at Hermann's. Lost my temper when he blamed me for losing the Battle of Britain.
Tuesday
Had Hanfstängl's deliver Hermann a new carpet. Working breakfast at Albert Speer's; designed a new integrated sports stadium and opera house.
Wednesday
To the Volksverlag to launch Alfred Rosenberg's new book, in which he demonstrates that black thinning hair, seedy complexion and leg spasms are the quintessence of the Übermensch. This is frankly a load of Leberwurst, but Josef insists it would be a mistake to say so.
Thursday
To the courts to watch Freiser; made a note to ask him where he buys his toothpaste, as his foaming was most impressive.
Friday
Mitzi is seven. As a birthday treat I had the entire General Staff dressed as waiters sing 'Mein grüner, grüner Kaktus steht auf dem Balkon' in front of her kennel.
Saturday
Early call. Invaded Russia.

MORAY MCGOWAN

Monday
Woke up thinking. Convinced myself that I was. But am I still? Too tired to think about it now.
Tuesday
Thought about what I wrote yesterday; but do I still exist? Will try to think about it tomorrow.
Wednesday
Wasted hours trying to think what it was I meant to think about today. Does this constitute thought? If so, what is my status in the matter?
Thursday
Thought a friend was coming to lunch today, but he didn't turn up. Or perhaps he did. Wonder what he thought.
Friday
Determined not to do any thinking today, and to concentrate on myself. Very disillusioning.
Saturday
Pleasantly non-existent morning. Rest of the day spoiled when I started thinking how nice it was.
Sunday
Unpleasant row with wife. Claimed I hadn't spoken to her all week, and that I might as well not exist. How thoughtless I am!

JONATHAN SLEIGH

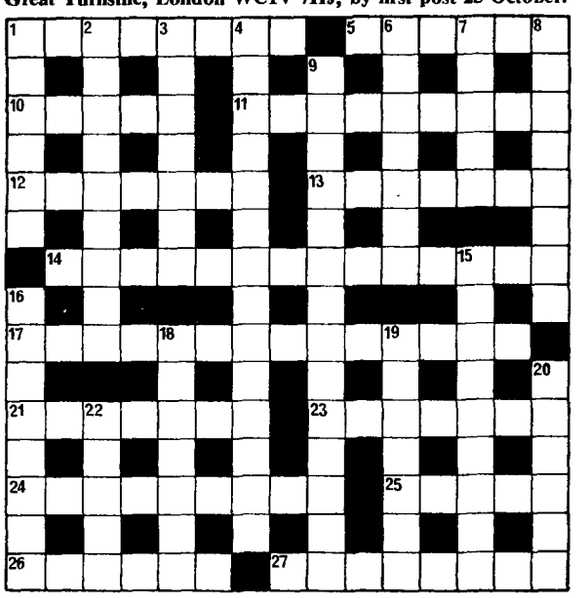
Yesterday or was it yesterday Miss Stein had a tea for a few friends maybe some were only acquaintances but no matter. Isadora Duncan showed her legs and made pretty eyes at Wyndham Lewis. Derain insisted on coffee likewise Ezra Pound who was looking thin and we didn't have much coffee left. But Edith Sitwell a dear persuaded Erik Satie to play who did so softly enough not to disturb Gertrude's passionate argument with Whitehead and Russell. It wasn't about art and could have been about philosophy because no one was winning. Poor Hemingway he was wedged between Cocteau and Rousseau and missed out on the cucumber sandwiches which were all consumed by Apollinaire and Eliot. Someday somebody somewhere should suggest that Gertrude Stein should tell about her few friends maybe some were only acquaintances but it's a thing worth telling anyway anyhow anytime.

RUSSELL LUCAS

This week's Chess column has been unavoidably held over.

Weekend Crossword 1237

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1237, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 25 October.



ACROSS

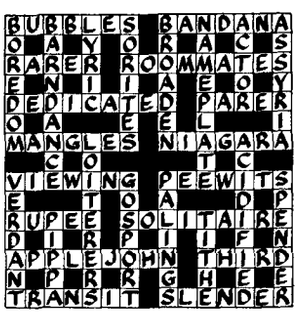
1. Drug which starts argument between archbishop and miners (8).
5. Reels for returning boats (6).
10. Youngster included in a photograph (5).
11. Possibly dry heated to make dry (9).
12. Be better than gold, but not in the home (7).
13. Eve of Greece (7).
14. Wealth is property, so the book says (8, 6).
17. They are put on food and give greetings to the salt (14).
21. Mother appears in dress material made for a railway worker (7).
23. Collects for a university man among fools (7).
24. Peers love going astray and stay too long in bed (9).
25. To give experience — about railwaymen, that is (5).
26. Supporters from south in Arab country (6).
27. Length the house goes to about time for military service? (8).

DOWN

1. Pet has upset deity and friend (6).
2. What Weller thought poetry was (9).
3. A speed or a vessel (7).
4. Warranted to make Ned argue with nature (5, 9).
6. Narrow scholars keep Archer among his animals (7).
7. Where a quotation is put between circles (5).
8. Groups about to pull up for officials (8).
9. Insignificant person who takes a photograph of a striker? (14).
15. This is bitter, not a sugar concoction (9).
16. Do a thousand plays as a form of worship (8).
18. Needs me to be involved in the estate (7).
19. In the capital I anxiously await a foreigner (7).
20. Ancient Jew who needs a hundred to fulfil the basic requirement (6).
22. 'What —— my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones' (Milton) (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1235



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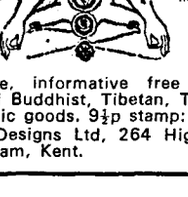

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The Committee invites applications for the post. Persons with appropriate qualifications and experience may write privately to the Chairman, Mr. A. J. Thayre (Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council), preferably at the University of Bradford. Suggestions of the names of others suitable for consideration would also be welcome.
The University Council reserves the right to appoint to the post by invitation.
Information about the University and further particulars of the post may be obtained from the Registrar, University of Bradford, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD7 1DP.

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 94 No. 2430

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company). 836 6404. Recorded booking info: 836 5332. 'Romeo and Juliet', 'The Comedy of Errors', Ibsen's 'Pillars of the Community' in repertoire. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse at Donmar Theatre. Week of 17 Oct: Brecht's 'Schweyk', Howard Barker's 'That Good Between Us' (not suitable for children), C. P. Taylor's 'Bandits' (not suitable for children). Also at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats' and Savoy Theatre in 'Man and Superman'.

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NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'The Plough and the Stars', 'Madras House', 'The Lady from Maxim's', 'State of Revolution', 'The Passion' and 'Judgement'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Evgs 7.30. Sats 5 & 8. Janet Suzman in 'The Good Woman of Setzuan'.

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Meetings

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower St. WC1E 6BT). The Freud Memorial Lectures in Psychoanalysis by Dr Hanna M. Segal, 'Psychoanalysis and the Freedom of Thought' Monday 17 October at 5.30. Admission free, without ticket.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St. WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. 18 Oct. 'Squatting—A Policy for the Urban Poor in Mexico?' by Dr P. M. Ward; 20 Oct. 'Faces of Royalty: The Artist's Impression'—1. Two BBC Enterproses films with commentary by Dr Roy Strong: 'Henry VIII—The Most Goodliest Prince' and 'Elizabeth I—Mask or Reality?' Admission free. Details of Public Lectures from Publications Office (send stamped envelope).

JEROME LEJEUNE, Professeur à la Faculté de Médecine de Paris, will give a lecture in English on 'The mentally-retarded child' on Tuesday 18 October at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place, SW7. Tel: 01-589 6211 ext. 38. Admission free.

YOUNG FABIAN GROUP. 'Minority Rights — Racism, Immigrants and the Police': Mr Paul Rose MP. Meeting Tues. 18 Oct. 8 p.m. at 11 Dartmouth St, London SW1.

SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER. Zionism—a socialist perspective by Andrew Hornung of *Workers Action. Talk and discussion.* 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6. Membs 20p. non-membs 50p. 8 p.m. Organised by Young Mapam. Everyone welcome.

'WHAT IS ISLAM?' talk by Shaikh Gamal Solaiman, London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W8. Sun. 16 Oct. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 23 Norfolk Sq., W1. Sun. 16 Oct. Swami Tripuranda on 'The Samkh ya Philosophy' at 5 p.m. All welcome.

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THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers: Sun. 16 Oct. 8 p.m. 'The Concept of God'. S.a.e. free pamphlet, programme, booklist. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 15 Oct. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 18 Oct. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 19 Oct. 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture *'Everyday Zen'*—*Irmgard Schloegl.* All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full prog.

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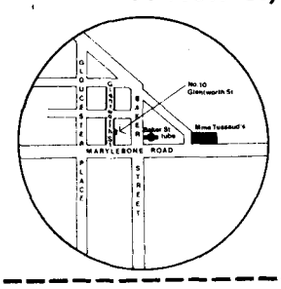

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